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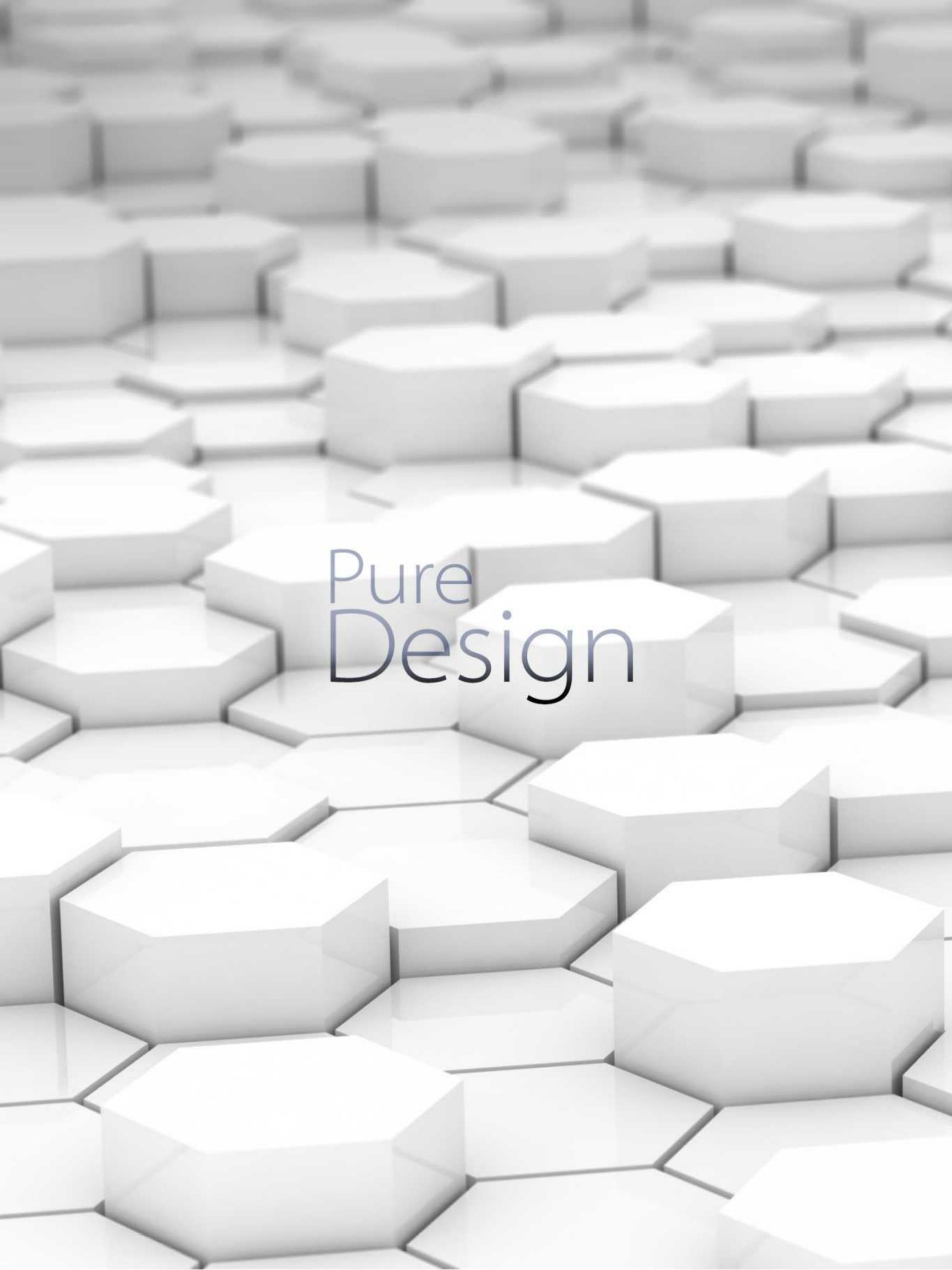
FANTASTIC FOUR
STELLAR ADVENTURE
LATEST SUPERHERO FILM
SERIES TO BE REBOOTED

FACEBOOK
READY
TO TEST

GIANT DRONE FOR
INTERNET SERVICE

ANGRY BIRDS 2

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FACEBOOK READY TO TEST GIANT DRONE FOR INTERNET SERVICE



Facebook says it will begin test flights later this year for a solar-powered drone with a wingspan as big as a Boeing 737, in the next stage of its campaign to deliver Internet connectivity to remote parts of the world.

Engineers at the giant social network say they've built a drone with a 140-foot wingspan that weighs less than 1,000 pounds. Designed to fly at high altitudes for up to three months, it will use lasers to send Internet signals to stations on the ground.

Though Facebook is better known for online software that lets people share news with friends, watch viral videos - and view commercial advertising - engineers in a unit called the Connectivity Lab are working on a different set of problems.



For one thing, they are designing a laser communications system they hope will be accurate enough to hit a target the size of a dime at a distance of 11 miles, said Yael Maguire, director of the unit, which is responsible for drones, satellites and other high-tech communications projects.

"There's a lot of moving parts here that have to work in concert," said Maguire, during a press briefing at the company's headquarters.

The project is part of a broader Facebook effort that also contemplates using satellites and other high-tech gear to deliver Internet service to hundreds of millions of people living in regions too remote for conventional broadband networks.

Other tech companies have launched similar initiatives. Google is experimenting with high-altitude balloons as well as drones and satellites. Microsoft has funded a project that will transmit Internet signals over unused television airwaves.



Facebook also has a separate but related initiative that works with wireless carriers to provide limited mobile Internet service at no cost, in countries where residents are too poor to afford traditional wireless plans.

But the company invited reporters Thursday to hear an update on its effort to provide service to about 10 percent of the world's population who live in regions where it's not practical or too expensive to build the usual infrastructure for Internet service.

Facebook's drone was developed in part with engineering expertise that joined the company when it acquired a British aerospace startup, Ascenta, last year. Facebook engineering vice president Jay Parikh said the team created a design that uses rigid but lightweight layers of carbon fiber, capable of flying in the frosty cold temperatures found at high altitudes, for an extended period of time.

The plan calls for using helium balloons to lift each drone into the air, Parikh said. The drones are designed to climb to 90,000 feet, safely above commercial airliners and thunderstorms, where they will fly in circles through the day. At night, he said, they will settle to about 60,000 feet to conserve battery power.

Each drone will fly in a circle with a radius of about 3 kilometers, which the engineers hope will enable it to provide Internet service to an area with a radius of about 50 kilometers.

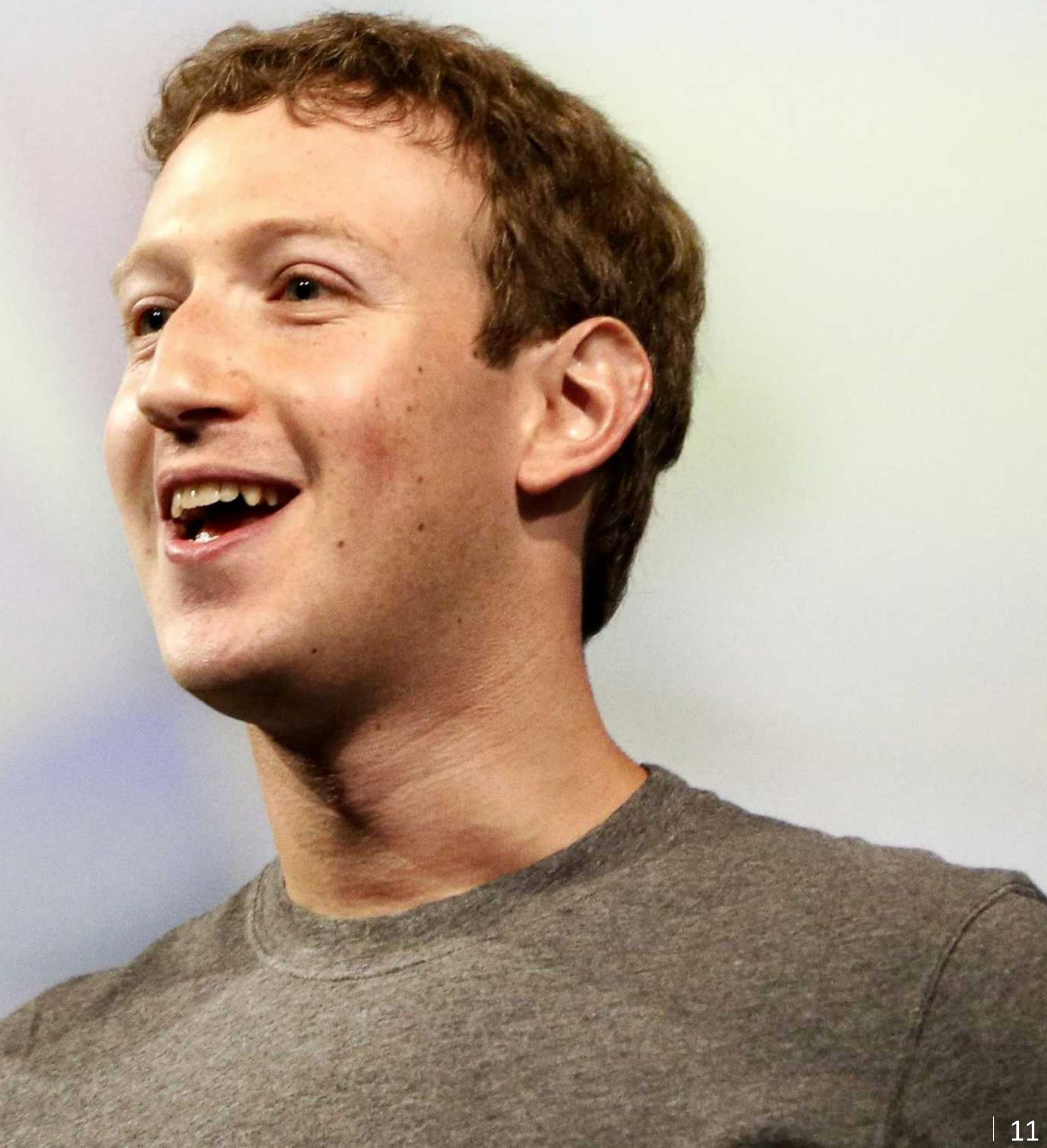
For the plan to work, Facebook's engineers are also counting on a recent breakthrough they've made in laser optics, which Maguire said would allow them to transmit data at up to 10 gigabits per second. That's comparable to fiber networks on the ground but about 10 times faster than standard laser signals, he said.

Facebook is designing the drones to transmit signals from one aircraft to another, so they can relay signals across a broader area on the ground, he added.

While Facebook has built and tested smaller prototypes at a plant in the United Kingdom, it's looking at a site in the United States for testing the full-sized drone, said Parikh, who declined to be more specific.

Facebook hopes to share the technology with telecommunications carriers and development agencies, which it hopes will build and operate the drone networks, Parikh said. "We're not going to operate this ourselves," he added. "We're focused on finding ways to drive the industry to move faster."

CEO Mark Zuckerberg has acknowledged Facebook's business will benefit in the long run if more people gain Internet access, but he says the effort isn't driven by profit-seeking. Instead, he has said it's based on the conviction that Internet service can bring a variety of economic and social benefits to developing nations.



MICROSOFT SAYS 14 MILLION COMPUTERS NOW RUNNING WINDOWS 10

Microsoft says its' new Windows 10 operating system is now running on more than 14 million computers, two days after the software was released as a free download.

That's a far cry from the company's goal of getting Windows 10 onto a billion devices within three years. Microsoft says it's releasing the software in waves to make sure downloads go smoothly.

In a blog post late Thursday, Microsoft said it has not yet delivered Windows 10 to everyone who requested a free upgrade for computers running older Windows versions. Microsoft says the 14 million includes some copies installed on new computers sold in stores.

Reaction has been mostly favorable, with reviewers calling the new Windows an improvement over the last version, known as Windows 8.



indows 10



Windows 10 -





RESEARCHERS WARN OF BOGUS EMAILS OFFERING WINDOWS 10

Some hackers are exploiting Microsoft's offer of free upgrades to its new Windows 10 operating system.

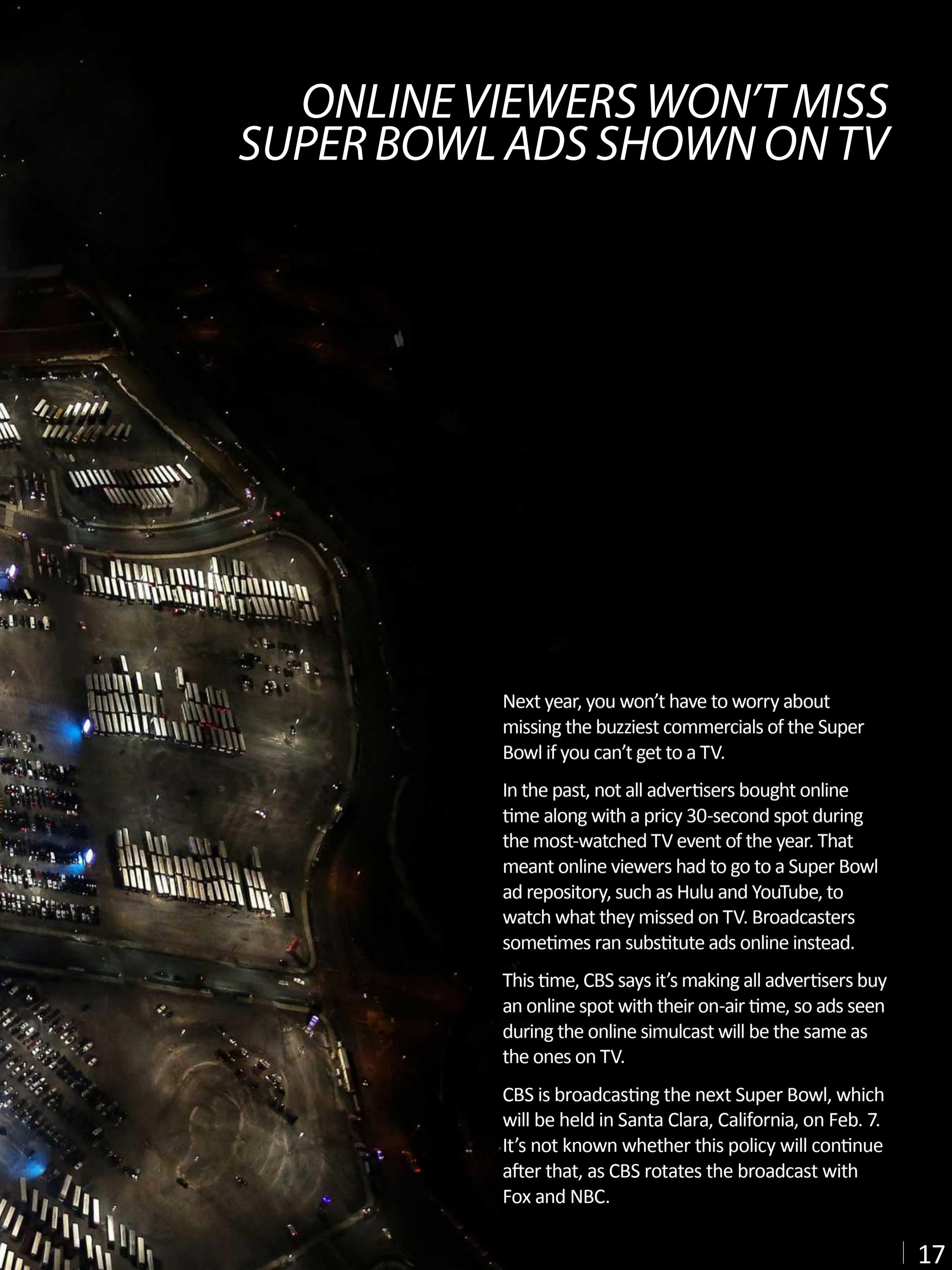
Security researchers are warning about a wave of bogus spam emails with malicious attachments, labeled as if they're legitimate copies of the new program.

The attachments contain a "ransomware" program that, when opened, locks all the data on a computer and demands payment to release them.

Researchers at Cisco Systems say the emails are designed to look like an official upgrade notice from Microsoft Corp., but several words have random, out-of-place letters and punctuation.

Another important clue: Microsoft says its update mechanism provides computer owners with a notice on their screens - not via email - when a direct Internet download is available. Experts warn against clicking on files that come with unsolicited emails.





ONLINE VIEWERS WON'T MISS SUPER BOWL ADS SHOWN ON TV

Next year, you won't have to worry about missing the buzziest commercials of the Super Bowl if you can't get to a TV.

In the past, not all advertisers bought online time along with a pricy 30-second spot during the most-watched TV event of the year. That meant online viewers had to go to a Super Bowl ad repository, such as Hulu and YouTube, to watch what they missed on TV. Broadcasters sometimes ran substitute ads online instead.

This time, CBS says it's making all advertisers buy an online spot with their on-air time, so ads seen during the online simulcast will be the same as the ones on TV.

CBS is broadcasting the next Super Bowl, which will be held in Santa Clara, California, on Feb. 7. It's not known whether this policy will continue after that, as CBS rotates the broadcast with Fox and NBC.



The Super Bowl is one of the rare times people watch ads rather than avoid them, as marketers try to reach more than 110 million Americans at once with ads designed to shock or make us laugh. During this year's game, 30-second ads were selling for \$4.5 million. CBS is aiming to increase that to \$4.7 million, not including what they can get for online playback. CBS wouldn't say how much it gets for online.

As with previous years, the online version will have a slight delay because of the time it takes for the broadcast signal to get converted into computer bits and travel to your device. So when you hear laughter or cheering in the next room, you might want to check your phone, tablet or laptop to watch it when the online video catches up.





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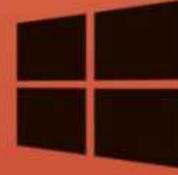
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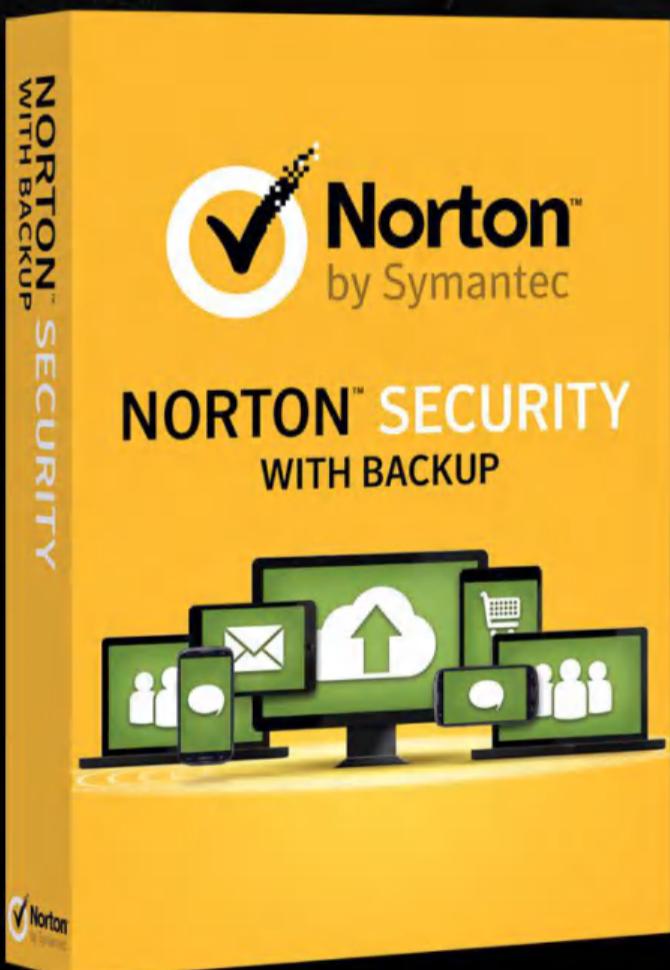
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**ANOTHER
PROMISING
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ADVENTURE
ON THE WAY
WITH THE
FANTASTIC FOUR**





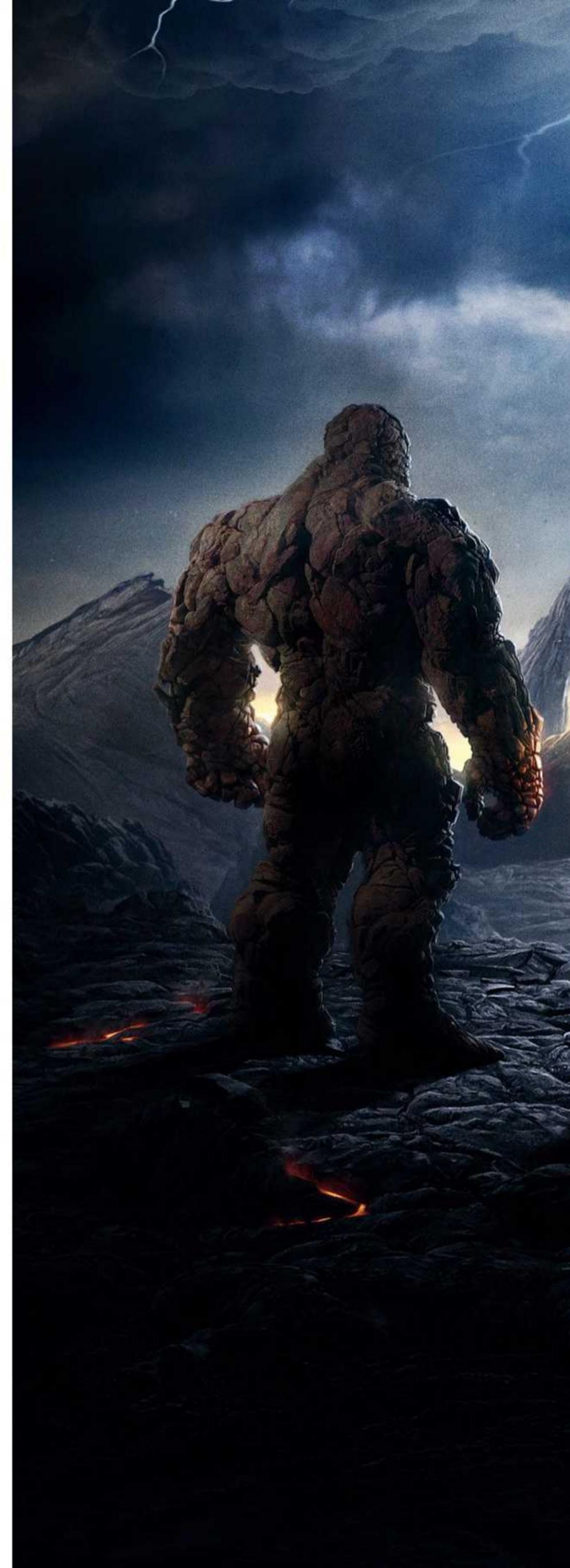
One of life's near-certainties, it seems, is that as long as there's a summer, there's a raft of superhero films gathering plaudits left, right and center. Surely enough, with us having only just recovered from the thrills of Avengers: Age of Ultron and Ant-Man, there's now yet another promising comic book adaptation in the form of the rebooted Fantastic Four. And, after a few less-than-fantastic false starts, the foursome could finally be getting the stellar adventure that they have been waiting for.

A RATHER UNORTHODOX CRIME-FIGHTING TEAM

Since their comic book debut in 1961, the Fantastic Four have proven themselves a somewhat unconventional superhero team. Comprised of super-stretchy leader Mr. Fantastic, sole female member Invisible Woman, literally fiery Human Torch and intimidating stony-fleshed Thing, the four are prone to squabbles and yet maintain effectiveness as team players to rival the Avengers. They have yet, however, to match the Avengers in big screen popularity - though it hasn't been for want of trying...

THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE LONG WAITED FOR A FANTASTIC MOVIE

Think of many of the enduring comic book icons conceived in the twentieth century and it likely won't be long before you can also think of a classic movie franchise adapted from each of them. With Superman, there's the Christopher Reeve series of the late









and 1980s, while Batman was shed of his previously established camp persona to deliciously dark effect in the Tim Burton and Christopher Nolan films. And then there are the various Marvel stablemates, including Iron Man, Captain America and Thor, who have much more recently been catapulted from relative obscurity into mainstream stardom on the back of excellent films.

For the Fantastic Four, however, the wait for any comparable golden moment has been long... too long. The very first live-action Fantastic Four film, called *The Fantastic Four*, was made in 1992, but only a small number of very discerning Fantastic Four fans and movie buffs have even seen it. That's because it was never actually released to theaters or on video; Stan Lee, the original creator of the characters in the comic books, said in 2005 that German producer Bernd Eichinger had opted to quickly make the film on a meager budget **only in order to keep the Fantastic Four film rights, the cast left completely unaware during shooting.**

Eichinger was, however, involved in the production of the first big-budget live action adventure for the quartet. This movie, called simply *Fantastic Four*, was thankfully brought to **theaters in 2005, where it amassed about \$330,579,700 globally**. The cast, which included Jessica Alba as Sue Storm and the future Captain America, Chris Evans, as Johnny Storm, was certainly more starry than its obscure predecessor's, but this did not save the film from a disparaging critical reception.

IT'S THAT WORD AGAIN: REBOOT!

That film's main cast and director, Tim Story, returned for a sequel, *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer*, two years later - but another slew of less-than-positive reviews was this time accompanied by a **poorer box office** return for 20th Century Fox. It is understandable, then, that **the studio later decided that a reboot of the franchise was the step forward**. Reboots of other comic book movie franchises have differed in their success, but there is good reason to believe that the new *Fantastic Four* film could join *Batman Begins* among the relatively few reboots to have breathed whole new life into a wilting cinematic series.

For a start, the studio appears to have chosen the new director carefully. If casual comic book fans are unlikely to recognize the name of Josh Trank, dedicated film buffs certainly should; he was responsible for 2012's science fiction thriller *Chronicle*, which **topped the US box office upon its release** and attracted positive reviews. Renowned late critic Roger Ebert remarked that it "grows into an uncommonly entertaining movie that involves elements of a superhero origin story, a science-fiction fantasy and a drama about a disturbed teenager".

There are worthy parallels to be drawn here between Trank's emerging stature as a young director and that of Christopher Nolan in the early 2000s - when, as avid film buffs will not need to be reminded, he was handed the job of completely starting over with the *Batman* franchise. The *Dark Knight* had,





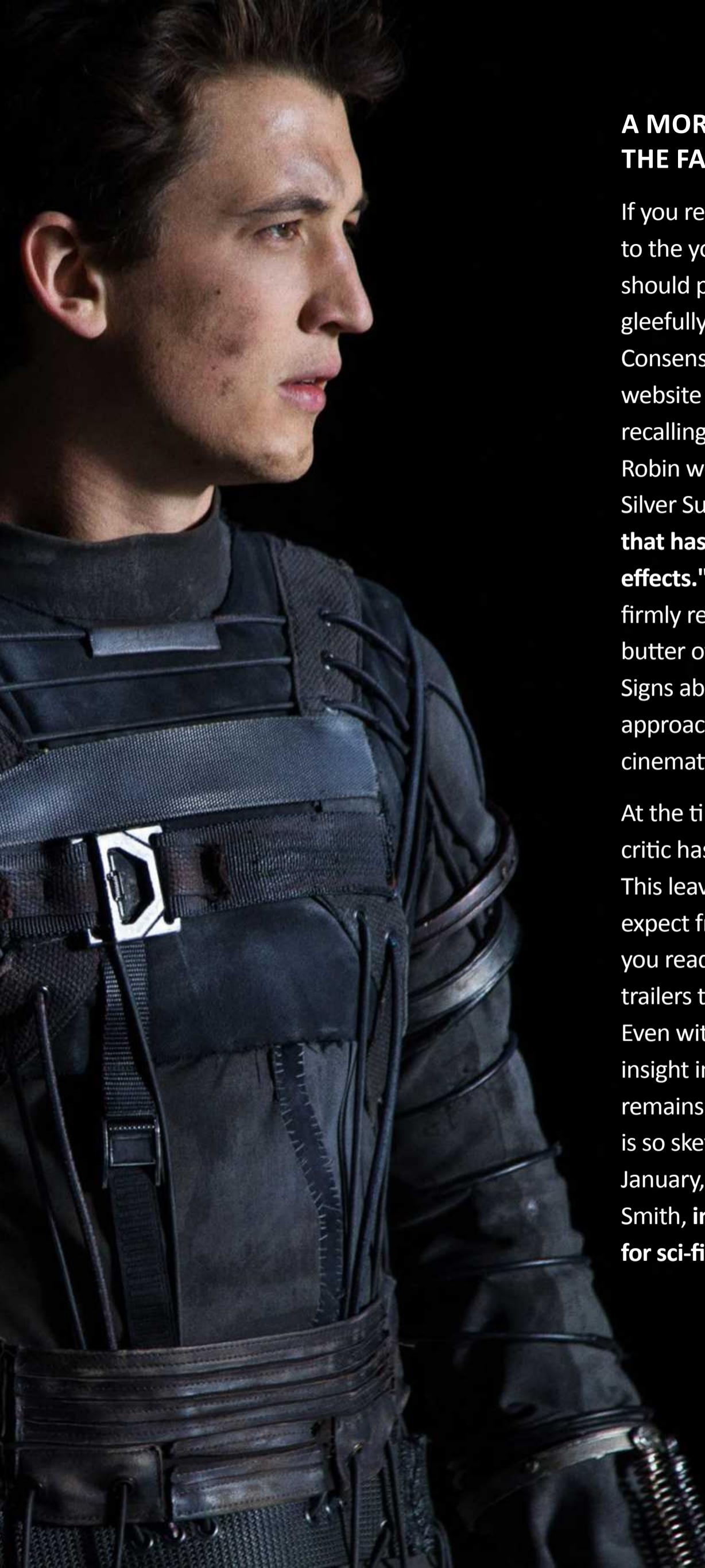




metaphorically-speaking, sheepishly slinked back to the Batcave following the disgrace of one of the most famous flops in movie history, Batman & Robin, in 1997. It had taken several years for him to regather the confidence to pull back on the cloak and return to Gotham's streets - but when he did...



Image: Alan Markfield



A MORE GROUNDED APPROACH TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR

If you reckon that we are brave to liken Trank to the young Nolan at this early stage, we should point out that we are far from merely gleefully engaging in hyperbole. In its Critics Consensus, the film review compilation website Rotten Tomatoes could almost be recalling contemporary attacks on Batman & Robin when it deplores that *The Rise of the Silver Surfer* is "**a juvenile, simplistic picture that has little benefit beyond its special effects.**" With *Batman Begins*, Nolan had firmly returned the focus to the bread-and-butter of good filmmaking: good storytelling. Signs abound that Trank has taken a similar approach in retooling the *Fantastic Four* as a cinematic property.

At the time that we write this, not a single top critic has publicly had their say about the film. This leaves us, for discerning what you should expect from a movie that will be in theaters as you read this, very reliant on the two teaser trailers that the studio has so far released. Even with these trailers, however, meaningful insight into how the adventure will pan out remains thin on the ground. The first trailer is so sketchy that, following its release in January, one Newsarama contributor, Zack Smith, **implied that it could pass as a trailer for sci-fi epic *Interstellar*.**

Nonetheless, most press reactions to this trailer, including our own, are positive. Anyone who watches it should be able to see the merits of our Batman Begins comparisons; that movie's director, incidentally, also having been at the helm for Interstellar. The cheesiness and reliance on special effects that characterized the Tim Story efforts have apparently been largely banished in favor of greater focus on characterization and dialog and an all-round brooding atmosphere. Could we be about to see the most intelligent blockbuster to arrive in theaters since Nolan left the world of Batman behind?

A WHOLE NEW FRANCHISE WITH WHOLE NEW STARS?

Should this Fantastic Four indeed prove a classic to launch a whole new cinematic superhero franchise, a whole new level of stardom could be in store for the young lead cast. Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans and Chris Hemsworth all owe much of their current stardom to their established roles as, respectively, Iron Man, Captain America and Thor in brilliant Marvel blockbusters. There is no obvious reason why Miles Teller as Mr. Fantastic, Michael B. Jordan as Human Torch, Kate Mara as Invisible Woman and Jamie Bell as Thing could not take their own treasured places in Marvel history - provided, crucially, that the new movie, and not just its leading characters, can now authentically be called fantastic. ■

by Benjamin Kerry & Gavin Lenaghan

Image: Ben Rothstein



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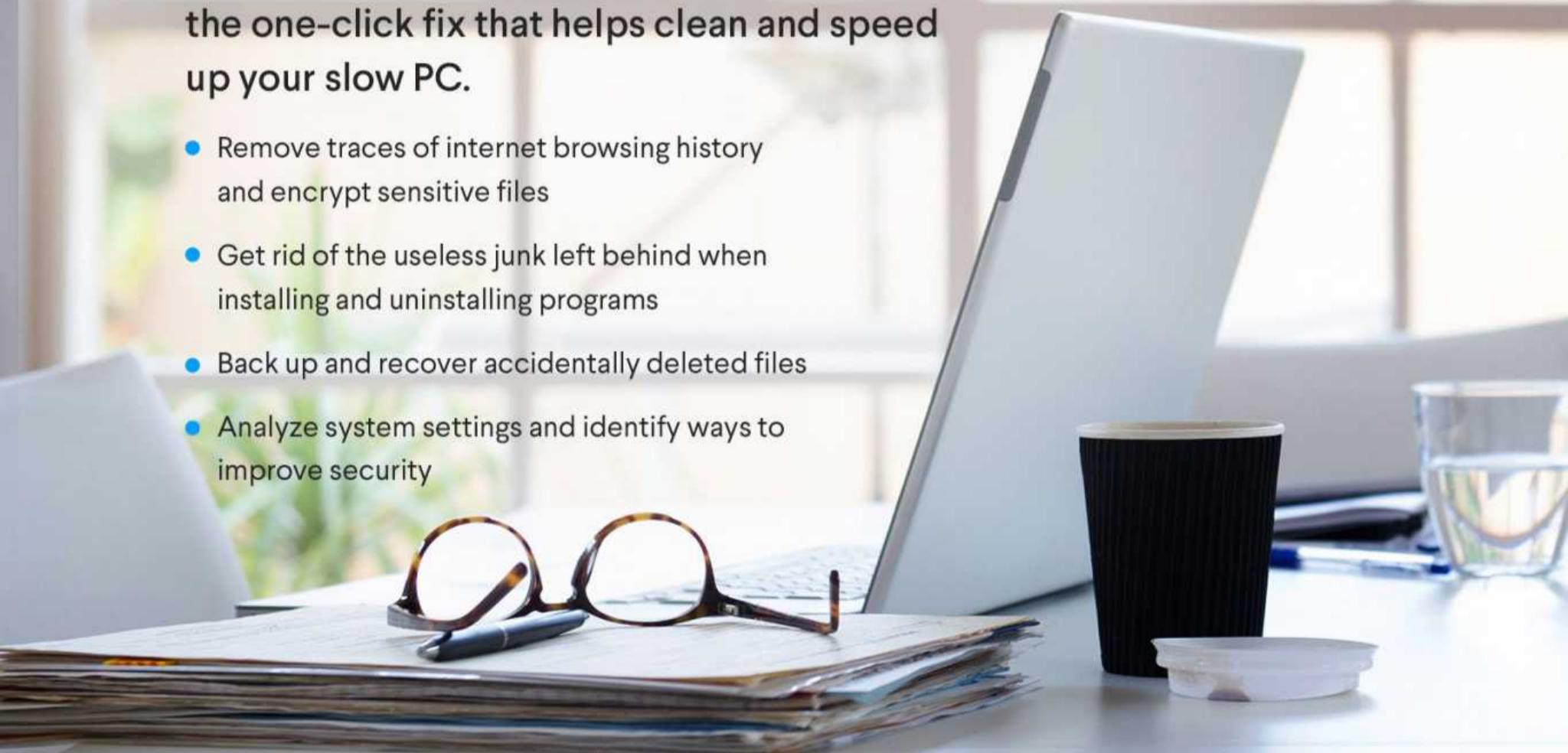
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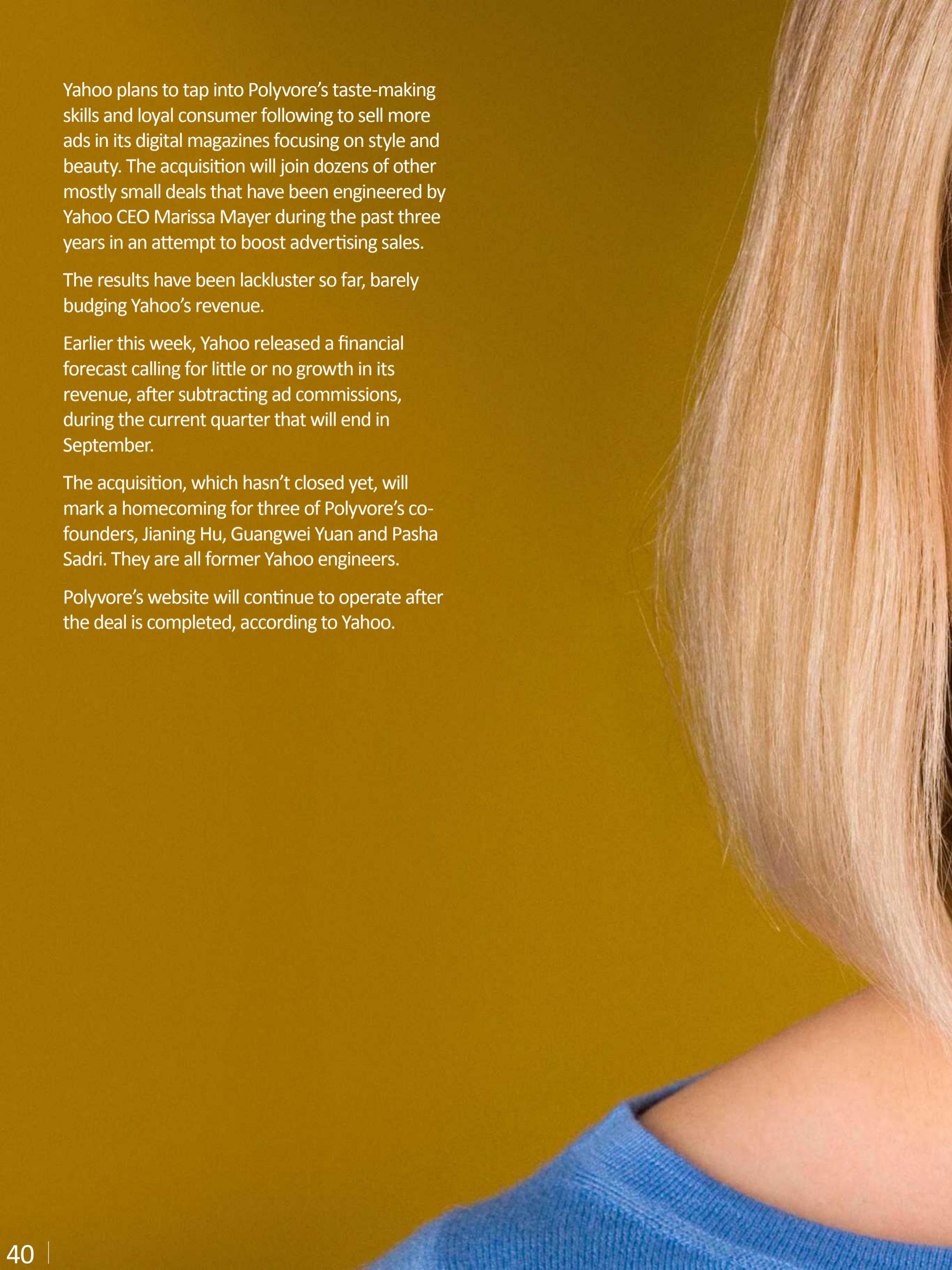
YAHOO

YAHOO TRIES TO GET MORE FASHIONABLE WITH POLYVORE PURCHASE

Yahoo is buying style-tip specialist Polyvore in its latest attempt to become a more fashionable place to advertise.

Financial terms of the deal announced Friday aren't being disclosed, signaling the price of the acquisition isn't considered to be significant.

Polyvore is an 8-year-old startup that specializes in connecting merchants with consumers browsing for ideas on clothing, health, beauty and home decor products. Good Housekeeping magazine once dubbed the service a "fashionista's playground."



Yahoo plans to tap into Polyvore's taste-making skills and loyal consumer following to sell more ads in its digital magazines focusing on style and beauty. The acquisition will join dozens of other mostly small deals that have been engineered by Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer during the past three years in an attempt to boost advertising sales.

The results have been lackluster so far, barely budging Yahoo's revenue.

Earlier this week, Yahoo released a financial forecast calling for little or no growth in its revenue, after subtracting ad commissions, during the current quarter that will end in September.

The acquisition, which hasn't closed yet, will mark a homecoming for three of Polyvore's co-founders, Jianing Hu, Guangwei Yuan and Pasha Sadri. They are all former Yahoo engineers.

Polyvore's website will continue to operate after the deal is completed, according to Yahoo.







APPLE SLUMP DEEPENS ON *iPhone*, CHINA CONCERNS

Apple is slumping as the usually high-flying tech stock struggles with the burden of raised expectations.

The world's most valuable public company saw its stock price drop for a fifth straight day on Tuesday, falling as much as \$5.19, or 4.4 percent, to \$113.25 as investors fret over China's economy and whether Apple can keep growing at the pace it's maintained over the last few quarters.

Apple shares closed Tuesday at \$114.64 - down 14 percent since hitting a record \$133.60 in February. That puts Apple in a "correction," which is Wall Street jargon for price declines of 10 percent or more from a peak. The slide has wiped out more than \$96 billion in market value.

The stock also dropped below its 200-day moving average, a technical indicator that traders use to gauge momentum. And as a sign of Apple's outsized role in the market, its





decline Tuesday accounted for more than half of the 47-point drop in the Dow Jones industrial average for the day. Apple is also by far the biggest component in the Standard & Poor's 500, making up 3.6 percent of the index, which is a benchmark for most mutual funds.

Apple sold more than 47 million of its signature iPhones in the last quarter, or 35 percent more than a year earlier. That drove the company's profit and earnings above Wall Street estimates. But demand for the iPhone and Apple's new smartwatch still fell short of some analysts' more bullish predictions, and executives gave a forecast for the current period that was also lower than some analysts expected. That has sent the stock into a decline since Apple reported earnings on July 21.

Shareholders are also worried about recent hiccups in China's economy, because the country is viewed as one of Apple's biggest markets for expansion, said Daniel Ives, a managing director and senior analyst for FBR Capital Markets.

He added that investors are looking ahead to the December quarter, which is traditionally Apple's strongest. The company sold 74 million iPhones during that period last year, a 46 percent jump. But with a much larger volume to compare against, it will be more difficult for Apple to show that kind of year-over-year growth again.

But new products like Apple Pay and the expected release of new iPhone models this fall could give the company a boost, Ives said.

Apple's current slump isn't as severe as an earlier slide that began almost three years ago, in a period when investors worried that the Cupertino, California, company had run out of ideas to counter growing competition from other smartphone and tablet makers. Apple shares fell 45 percent from a split-adjusted peak of \$100.72 in September 2012 to a low of \$55.01 in April 2013. By June of that year, however, the stock had embarked on a steady climb upward again.

**"Bigger.
Badder.
Birdier."**

**But is
this
enough
for**

We look at the
Angry Birds
licensing phenomenon

**Angry
Birds 2?**



On 30 July, Rovio Entertainment launched Angry Birds 2, the first direct sequel to the original Angry Birds - a puzzle game which developed from what initially seemed an amusing, if addictive, distraction into a world-conquering cultural phenomenon, encompassing not only games, but also cartoons, foods and even theme parks. However, since the franchise's peak of popularity in 2012, more and more cracks have been forming. With Angry Birds 2, has Rovio Entertainment just - ahem - hatched the remedy for a franchise in danger of fading into irrelevance?

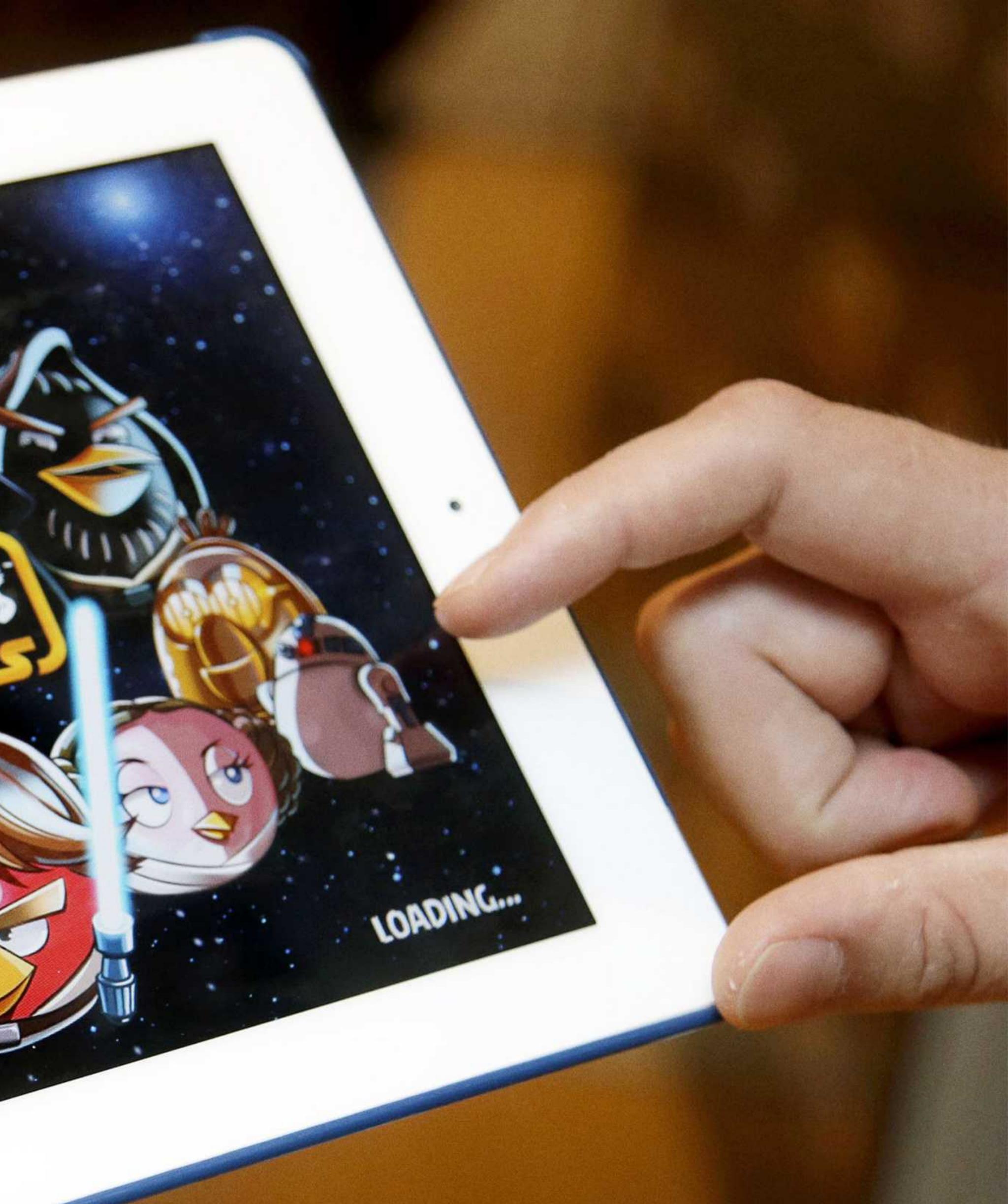
FROM TINY ACORNS... BLOB-SHAPED CARTOON BIRDS GROW

All of this started with just one game: a modest-looking puzzler called Angry Birds released as a cheap iOS game, available in an App Store that was then not yet two years old, in December 2009. Its premise, when introduced in an article like this so many years later, still comes across as utterly crackers: the player uses a slingshot to fire flightless birds at pigs to stop them stealing eggs. These pesky pigs use wooden, metal and glass houses as their shields, but the player can tweak the power and direction of their shots to wipe out the structures.

Even back then, however, the idea wasn't exactly world-shaking. In a review published just two months after its release, IGN's Levi Buchanan acknowledged its close similarity to another mobile game, Crush the Castle, but declared that "Angry Birds outstrips that



Image: Gary He







addictive puzzler in personality". He added that, "**thanks to precise controls, great puzzle designs, and excellent atmosphere, Angry Birds is outrageously addictive.**"

The rapid growth in the popularity of Angry Birds soon after its earliest release led to the kind of lucrative franchising that had long seemed a practical possibility only for much more firmly-established cultural properties like Star Wars and Batman. This has only been encouraged by the little blob-like avians appearing in successive Angry Bird games - some adhering to the original's gameplay, others moving into genres including action, racing and role-playing.

ANGRY BIRDS' SUCCESS IS ROVIO ENTERTAINMENT'S SUCCESS

Given the staggering cultural reach, let alone mere commercial success, of Angry Birds, it could seem peculiar that it is only now that a proper sequel to the original game has been uncaged. However, it begins to make a lot more sense when the general trajectory of the franchise is studied more closely. As the long term decline of Angry Birds threatens to also undermine Rovio Entertainment, the launch of the series' first direct sequel is a serious statement of intent by the company the future of which could be heavily reliant on its success.

However precarious the company's standing might currently be, however, it has clearly built a huge prestige that could help cushion it against any fall. **Rovio Entertainment began in very inconspicuous circumstances in 2003** - when, under the name Relude, its intentions were very much those of simply a mobile games developer, and a fledgling one at that. In fact, the company, which changed its name to Rovio Mobile in 2005, made over fifty games before it finally turned its attention to the game which would utterly dwarf the rest of its portfolio in mainstream popularity and commercial success: the original mobile game of Angry Birds for iOS.

In July 2011, the company changed its name again, this time to Rovio Entertainment. This was a telling reflection of how much the success of Angry Birds as a cultural force, not merely a series of games, had led













the business to shift its overriding focus. In June 2014, one of Rovio's most high profile staffers, Peter Vesterbacka, insisted that it **was no longer just a games developer, but instead now an entertainment and education company** - apparently driven by the fact that merchandising and licensing was responsible for about half of its 2013 revenue of \$216 million.

FROM MORE GAMES, TO CARTOONS, TO EVEN PARKS

It seems a good moment, then, to look more closely at that merchandising and licensing. Naturally, huge demand for the original Angry Birds game made further Angry Birds games an easy sell for Rovio. Perhaps due to a desire to stick to what the company must have then perceived as a winning formula, many of the early Angry Birds follow-ups did not actually stray from the first game's fundamental mechanics. Instead, the big changes were cosmetic, as Angry Birds Rio, Angry Birds Star Wars and Angry Birds Star Wars II tied in with popular films.

However, once a few years had passed and the Angry Birds brand had become more familiar, the situation must have seemed ideal for branching out into other genres. Hence, there was the arrival of another tie-in, Angry Birds Transformers, which is a side-scrolling shooter with the wonderful catchphrase of "Birds Disguised as Robots in Disguise". There was also Angry Birds Go!, the wingless wonders' answer to Mario Kart.





Given the birds' cute appeal, placing them in their own animated adventures must have seemed like a no-brainer. Surely enough, **such animated adventures, including Angry Birds Toons and Angry Birds Stella, can be watched through ToonsTV** - the online video network that Rovio launched in March 2013 and has proved yet another success for the firm, having attracted 4 billion views by the following year's end. These programmes have obvious appeal for children, who can also enjoy the official Angry Birds parks that have opened in various places, including **public spaces in Finland** and the British theme park Lightwater Valley, **which operates an Activity Park with slides and touchscreen devices running the game.**

HOPES PLACED IN ANGRY BIRDS 2 AND A BIG MOVIE NEXT SUMMER

These all read like pleasing developments for Rovio, but one serious dilemma that has emerged particularly recently has been that of the Angry Birds apparently losing popularity - and, with it, revenue. In September 2014, **it was reported that the number of monthly active players of Angry Birds had fallen to 200m, from a cited peak of 263m at the end of 2012.** This was a drop of 24% - and, **in March, Rovio reported that its revenues in 2014 totaled €158.3m, compared to €173.5m the year before.** Much poorer sales of the Finnish company's consumer products, which include Angry Birds merchandise, were responsible for the overall decline in revenue.



Still, the firm's recently-appointed CEO, Pekka Rantala, has eyed the upcoming Angry Birds feature film for new licensing opportunities, reporting that it is "getting very positive reactions from major retail and license partners as well as from consumer focus groups". As this movie, which will count Jason Sudeikis, Josh Gad and Peter Dinklage among its cast, will not be arriving in theaters until May 2016, it seems too early to judge how well it will likely be received by the public and critics.

Regardless of its quality, however, it could gain a valuable boost in attention should Angry Birds 2 take off in the time before the

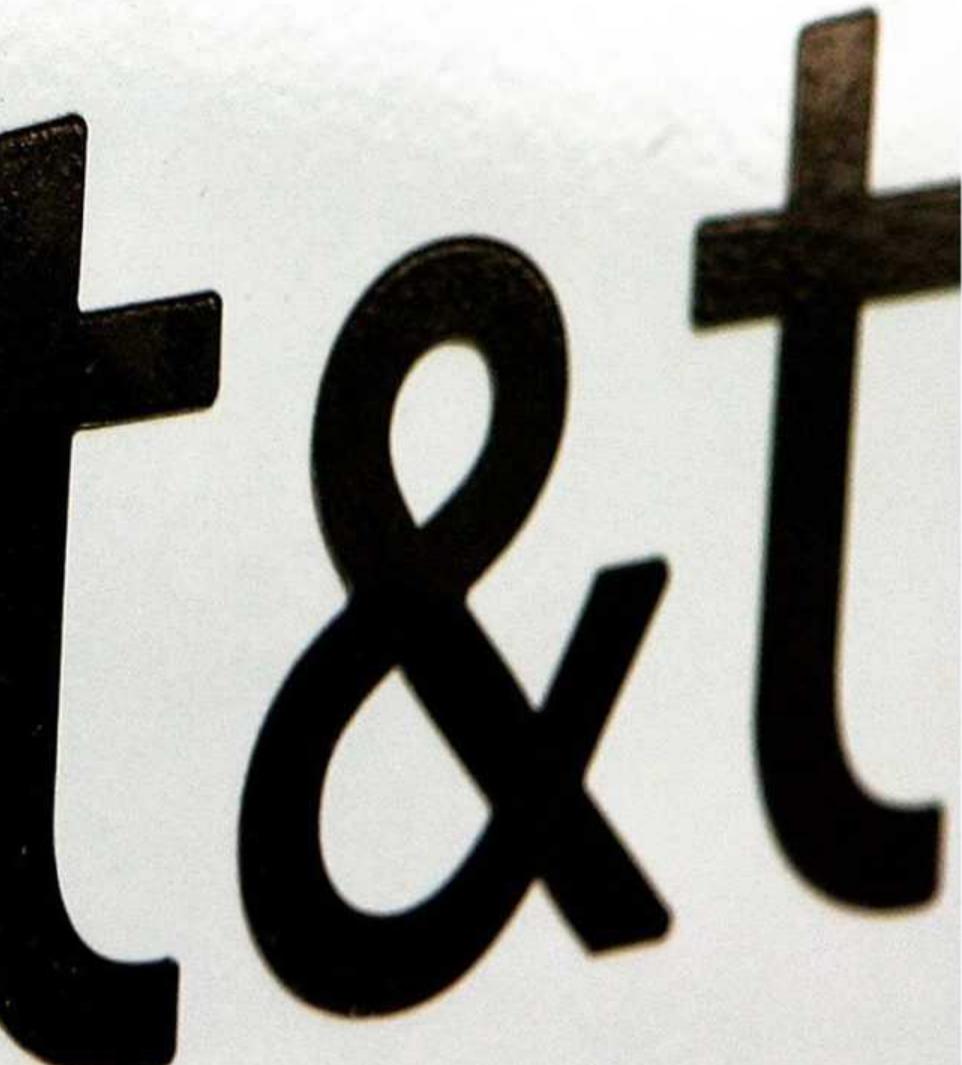
movie's release. The chances of that look promising; at the time that we type these words, the game is topping the chart for free iOS games, and has already amassed almost 4,000 ratings just a few days after launching. The game's average rating, by the way, stands at four stars out of five. How much new life this game will breathe into the Angry Birds brand remains to be seen. However, it's safe to say that, pending a great reception for that film, however Rovio Entertainment feel about the performance of their impressively diverse Angry Birds portfolio as a whole this time next year, it is unlikely to be angry. ■

by Benjamin Kerry & Gavin Lenaghan





au



AT&T, AS NEW OWNER OF DIRECTV, OFFERS TV-WIRELESS DISCOUNT

AT&T customers will save \$10 a month and get a single bill for their TV and wireless services under a new package the company is offering after its \$48.5 billion purchase of satellite TV company DirecTV 10 days ago.

Under the new package, customers will get a single number to call for customer service. And employees at AT&T stores will be able to set up customers' phones so they can start watching TV through apps right away, even before service is installed in the living room. But the content on phones - a subset of what's available on regular TVs - won't differ from what DirecTV customers have already been able to get on their apps.

The changes aren't huge, given that AT&T and DirecTV already had deals as separate companies to sell each other's services. But Monday's announcement is "the first step of what's to come," said Brad Bentley, AT&T's chief marketing officer for entertainment and Internet services.

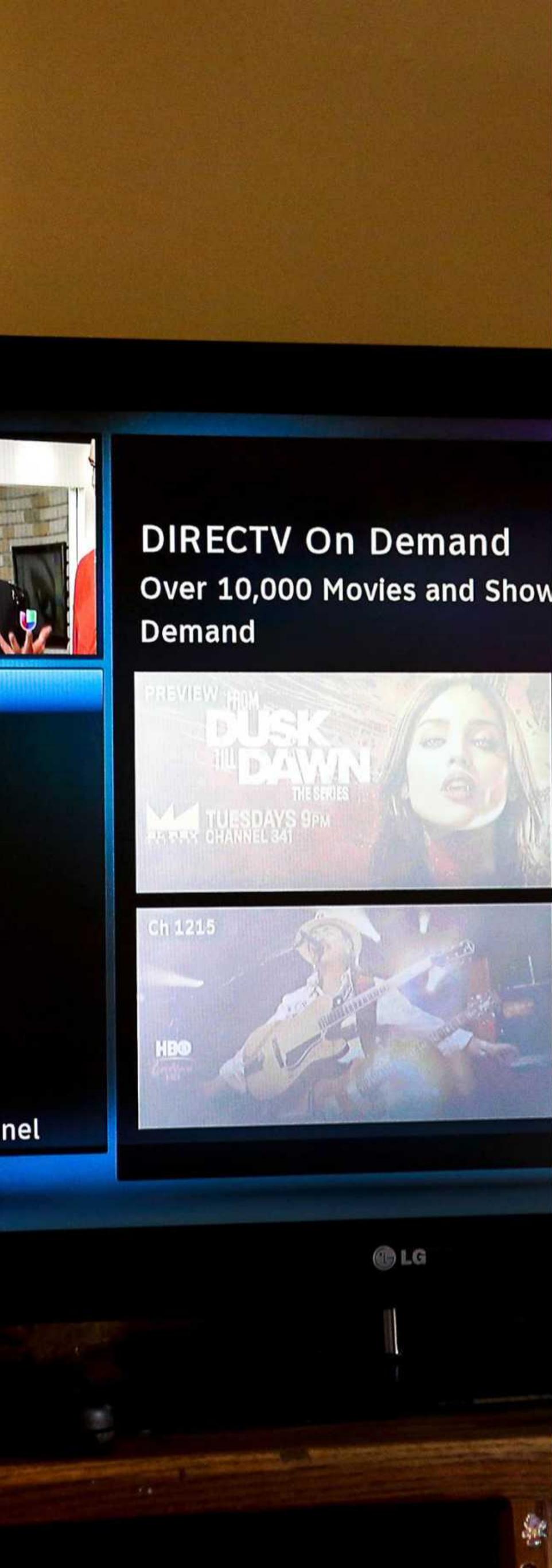


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What's New

- [All](#)
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Roger Entner, an analyst at Recon Analytics, said TV as a stand-alone business is dead, as consumers see TV as part of their overall media and telecommunications experience. So far, AT&T is the only company able to provide both mobile and TV services. Rivals are limited to partnerships, which Entner said don't work as well for consumers and the companies.

"It's a beginning, but an important beginning," Entner said of the new package.

Moody's analyst Mark Stodden said the package "is a good first step but not the type of innovative product offer that the company needs to differentiate its services." Without offering new capabilities, such as unique content from DirecTV, AT&T will have to keep prices low because of intense competition, Stodden said.

"The question remains as to whether AT&T can deliver this product innovation and how long it will take to bring that to the market at scale," Stodden said.

Bentley said more service integration is coming, but he wouldn't provide details.

Other than the \$10-a-month discount, the promised savings aren't unusual.

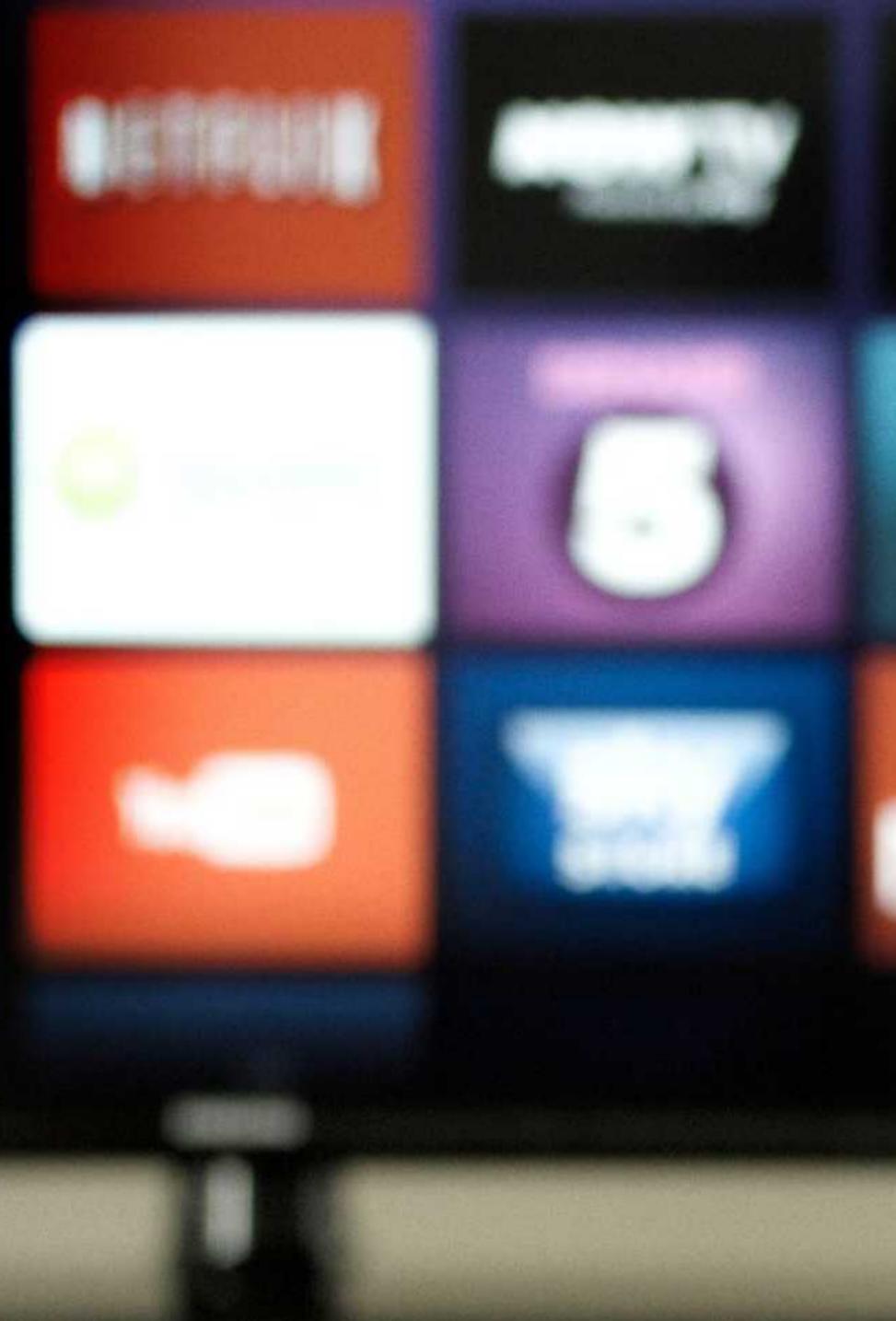
At AT&T, TV services will cost \$50 to \$125 a month for the first 12 months, after which regular prices take effect. AT&T says that's a savings of roughly \$35 a month. But traditional TV providers already offer these types of promotions for the first year or two.

Wireless companies also have been offering all sorts of deals to lure customers from rival carriers. AT&T is offering \$100 for each line switched from a rival, plus a \$200 credit per line for trading in an old phone.

In the wireless industry, deals have become routine as carriers fight for each other's customers, given that most Americans already have cellphones. Just last week, T-Mobile said

customers will keep the \$15 monthly price for leasing an iPhone 6 and \$19 for a 6 Plus if Apple releases new models, possibly in September. Sprint announced a family plan offering four lines with 10 gigabytes of data to share for \$20 less than what it charges for 1 gigabyte.

AT&T's offer starts Aug. 10, and customers can choose any level of TV and wireless service to qualify for the \$10 discount. The company also is extending the offer to customers of U-Verse, which is the traditional TV service AT&T delivers over wired lines in 21 states. Specific channels will differ, though, and a package of football games called Sunday Ticket will be available on DirecTV only because of the nature of DirecTV's deals with the NFL.





NETFLIX TO MAKE ASIAN DEBUT WITH SEPT. 2 LAUNCH IN JAPAN

Netflix will expand into Japan next month to give the Internet video service its first presence in Asia.

Japanese subscribers will be able to start watching Netflix on Internet-connected devices beginning Sept. 2.

Netflix already sells its services in dozens of other countries outside the U.S. as part of its ambition to be available throughout the world by the end of next year.

The costs of the international expansion have been holding down Netflix's profits, but investors haven't minded because the company has been quickly winning over new customers. Netflix now has about 65 million subscribers, more than twice as many as it had three years ago.

Netflix's stock surged to a new high of \$122.79 during Tuesday's trading and has more than doubled so far this year.



A close-up, high-contrast portrait of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing dark sunglasses and a grey suit jacket over a light shirt. He is holding his right hand up to the camera, showing fingers stained with blood. The background is a blurred cityscape at night.

NETFLIX

TOP Free Apps

iOS



#01 – Facebook Messenger

By Facebook, Inc.

Category: Social Networking

Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#02 – SpongeBob Moves In

By Nickelodeon

Category: Games

Requires iOS 5.1.1 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#03 – Facebook

By Facebook, Inc.

Category: Social Networking

Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#04 – Instagram

By Instagram, Inc.

Category: Photo & Video

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#05 – YouTube

By Google, Inc.

Category: Photo & Video

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



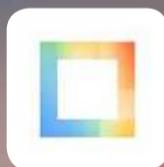
#06 – Snapchat

By Snapchat, Inc.

Category: Photo & Video

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#07 – Layout from Instagram

By Instagram, Inc.

Category: Photo & Video

Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#08 – Agar.io

By Miniclip.com

Category: Games

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



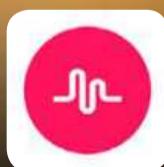
#09 – Pandora Radio

By Pandora Media, Inc.

Category: Music

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#10 – musical.ly

By Jun Zhu

Category: Photo & Video

Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.

TOP Free Apps



#01 – OS X Yosemite

By Apple
Category: Utilities
Compatibility: OS X 10.6.8 or later



#02 – App for Instagram

By Joacim Ståhl
Category: Social Networking
Compatibility: OS X 10.7 or later, 64-bit processor



#03 – Xcode

By Apple
Category: Developer Tools
Compatibility: OS X 10.8.4 or later



#04 – Microsoft OneNote

By Microsoft Corporation
Category: Productivity
Compatibility: OS X 10.9 or later



#05 – Microsoft Remote Desktop

By Microsoft Corporation
Category: Business
Compatibility: OS X 10.7 or later, 64-bit processor



#06 – Dr. Cleaner

By Trend Micro
Category: Utilities
Compatibility: OS X 10.9 or later, 64-bit processor



#07 – Kindle

By AMZN Mobile LLC
Category: Reference
Compatibility: OS X 10.6 or later



#08 – Fotor Photo Editor

By Chengdu Everimaging Science and Technology Co., Ltd
Category: Photography
Compatibility: OS X 10.7 or later, 64-bit processor



#09 – The Unarchiver

By Dag Agren
Category: Utilities
Compatibility: OS X 10.6.0 or later



#10 – ooVoo Video Call, Text and Voice

By ooVoo LLC
Category: Social Networking
Compatibility: OS X 10.7 or later, 64-bit processor



Mac OS X

TOP Paid Apps

iOS



#01 – Minecraft – Pocket Edition

By Mojang

Category: Games / Price: \$6.99

Requires iOS 5.1.1 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#02 – Heads Up!

By Warner Bros.

Category: Games / Price: \$0.99

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#03 – Goat Simulator

By Coffee Stain Studios

Category: Games / Price: \$0.99

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#04 – Facetune

By Lightricks Ltd.

Category: Photo & Video / Price: \$3.99

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone 4, iPhone 4S, iPhone 5, iPhone 5c, iPhone 5s, iPhone 6, iPhone 6 Plus, iPad, and iPod touch. This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#05 – Mods for Minecraft Pocket Edition

By JK2Designs LLC

Category: Entertainment / Price: \$1.99

Requires iOS 6.1 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#06 – Prune

By Joel McDonald

Category: Games / Price: \$3.99

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#07 – Plague Inc.

By Ndemic Creations

Category: Games / Price: \$0.99

Requires iOS 4.3 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#08 – Afterlight

By Afterlight Collective, Inc

Category: Photo & Video / Price: \$0.99

Requires iOS 6.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5, iPhone 6, and iPhone 6 Plus.



#09 – THE GAME OF LIFE Classic Edition

By Electronic Arts

Category: Games / Price: \$0.99

Requires iOS 5.1.1 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.



#10 – Akinator the Genie

By Elokence

Category: Entertainment / Price: \$1.99

Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

This app is optimized for iPhone 5.

TOP Paid Apps

#01 – GarageBand

By Apple
Category: Music / Price: \$4.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.9 or later



#02 – Star Wars®: Knights of the Old Republic™ II

By Aspyr Media, Inc.
Category: Games / Price: \$9.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.9.5 or later



#03 – AntiVirus Sentinel Pro

By Calin Popescu
Category: Utilities / Price: \$9.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.7 or later, 64-bit processor



#04 – Disk Doctor

By FIPLAB Ltd
Category: Utilities / Price: \$2.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.7.3 or later, 64-bit processor



#05 – Final Cut Pro

By Apple
Category: Video / Price: \$299.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.10.2 or later, 64-bit processor



#06 – Logic Pro X

By Apple
Category: Music / Price: \$199.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.8.4 or later, 64-bit processor



#07 – The Sims™ 2: Super Collection

By Aspyr Media, Inc.
Category: Games / Price: \$29.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.9.2 or later



#08 – OS X Server

By Apple
Category: Utilities / Price: \$19.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.9.5 or later



#09 – BetterSnapTool

By Andreas Hegenberg
Category: Productivity / Price: \$1.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.6 or later, 64-bit processor



#10 – FaceTime

By Apple
Category: Social Networking / Price: \$0.99
Compatibility: OS X 10.6.6 or later



Mac OS X

iTunes Review



Trailer

Movies
& TV Shows



A LEGO Brickumentary

Since 1958, The LEGO Group has made more than 400 billion bricks - and, in that time, this fun toy has grown considerably in global popularity. It has also been used for an increasing variety of unorthodox purposes. Jason Bateman narrates this playful documentary which looks at Adult Fans of LEGO, how LEGO is being put to educational and therapeutic uses, and much more.

[iTunes Preview](#)



by Kief Davidson &
Daniel Junge
Genre: Kids & Family
Released: 2015
Price: \$14.99

★★★★★
83 Ratings

Rotten Tomatoes
 53%

FIVE FACTS:

1. This feature was released in theaters and on iTunes on the same day: July 31, 2015.
2. The narrator is an animated Lego minifigure voiced by Jason Bateman.
3. Adult Fans of LEGO have become commonly referred to as AFOLs.
4. The original title was **Beyond the Brick: A Lego Brickumentary**.
5. Co-director Daniel Junge has responded to complaints about the film's uncritical stance towards the little plastic bricks by pointing out that "Lego had no editorial control over the film" and so "the love that you see in the film is coming from us as filmmakers."

See more in
iTunes



Director Interviews





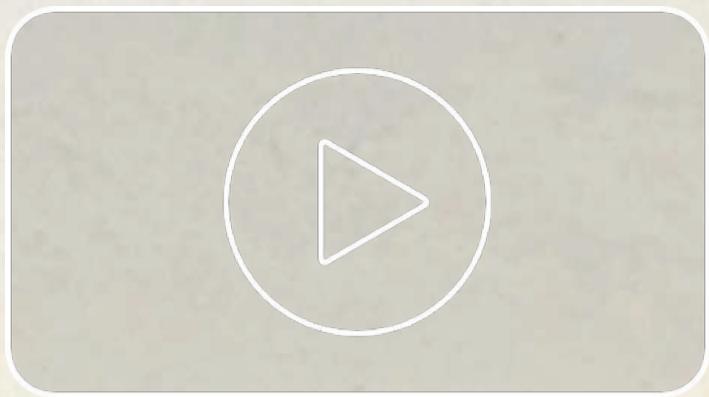
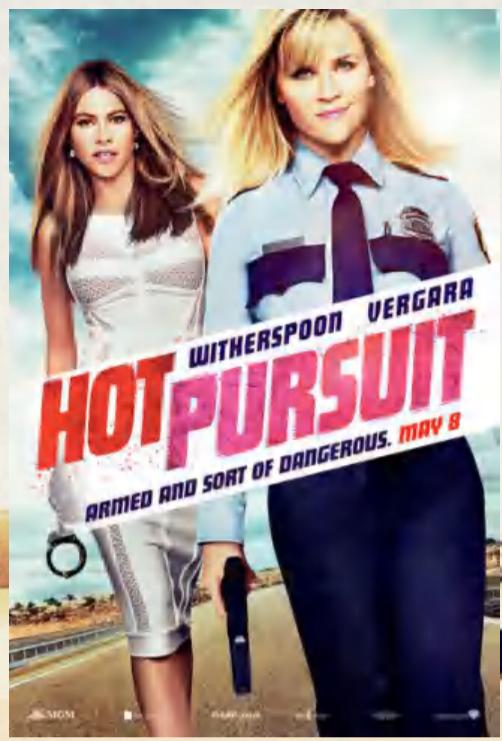
Hot Pursuit

Straight-laced San Antonio Police Department officer Rose Cooper (Reese Witherspoon) is endeavoring to keep safe Daniella Riva (Sofía Vergara), drug boss Filipe Riva's (Vincent Laresca) alluring and outgoing widow. The two women are on the run through Texas, while crooked cops and violent gunmen remain in - yes - hot pursuit. What will the fleeing pair do to escape their grasp?

FIVE FACTS:

1. The movie has attracted widespread derision from critics; the Critics Consensus on Rotten Tomatoes reads: "Shrill and unfunny, Hot Pursuit bungles what should have been an easy opportunity to showcase Reese Witherspoon and Sofía Vergara's likable odd-couple chemistry."
2. Rob Kazinsky, who plays Randy in this film, had been set to play Fili in Peter Jackson's The Hobbit trilogy, but **dropped out "for personal reasons", according to Jackson.**
3. A particularly revealing blunder for Apple fans is that, when Daniella's iPhone is run over and its screen becomes detached early in the film, the home screen remains showing. **A genuine iPhone's screen would actually have gone black upon incurring damage.**
4. Remarkably, this film's US release date came **exactly 28 years after that of the 1987 John Cusack movie of the same name.**
5. **The original title was Don't Mess with Texas** - and this title can still be seen in the URL of Hot Pursuit's page on Rotten Tomatoes.





Trailer

iTunes Preview



by Anne Fletcher
Genre: Action & Adventure
Released: 2015
Price: \$19.99



93 Ratings



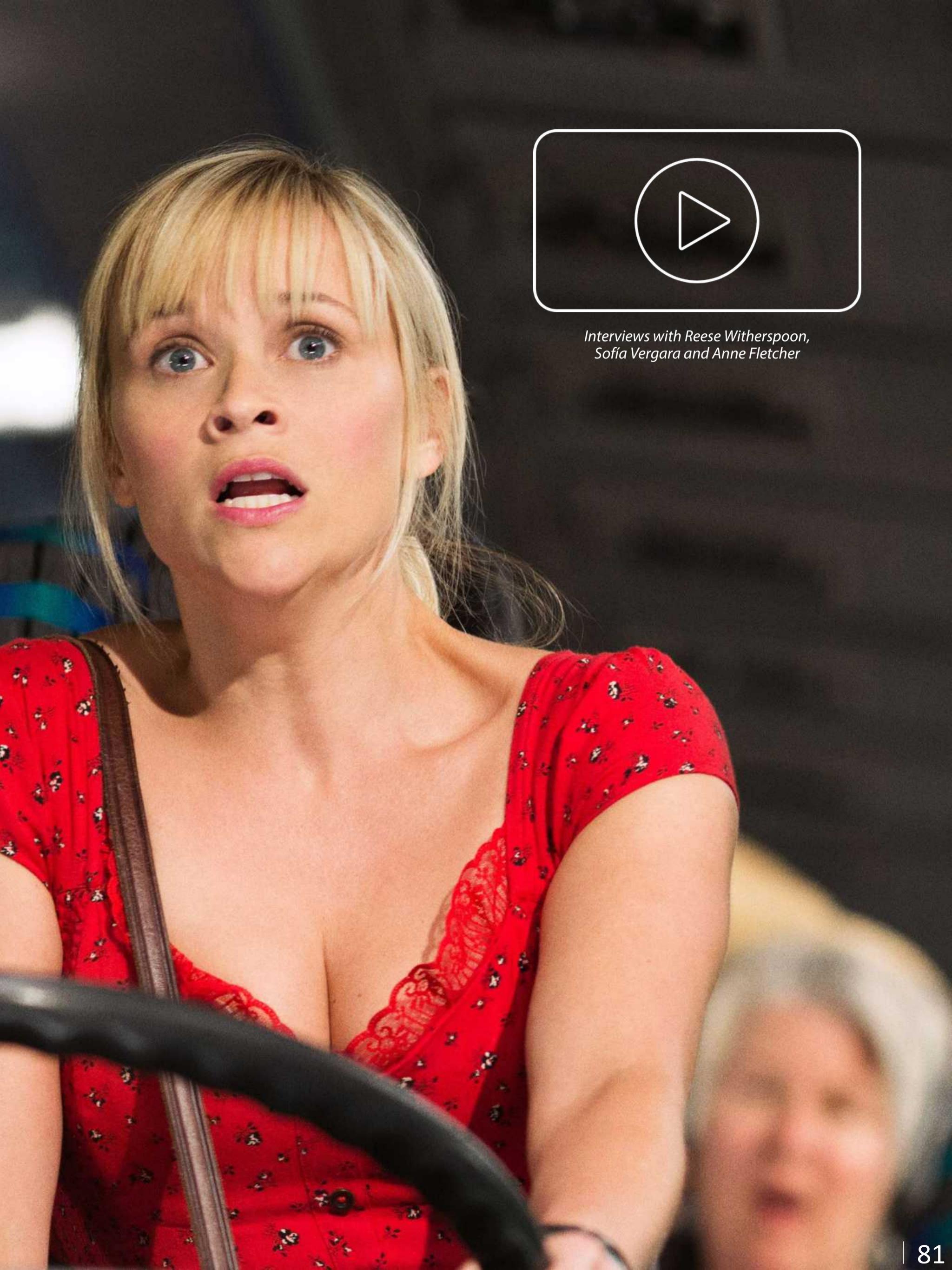
Rotten Tomatoes
08%







*Interviews with Reese Witherspoon,
Sofia Vergara and Anne Fletcher*



iTunes

Review

Music





iTunes Preview



Genre: Alternative

Released: Jul 31, 2015

11 Songs

Price: \$9.99



9 Ratings



Marks to Prove It

Marks to Prove It

The Maccabees

This is the long-awaited new studio album from the British indie rock band The Maccabees. The band received little exposure with their very first single, "X-Ray", back in 2005 - but, since then, have amassed more fans and acclaim through positive word of mouth. Their last studio compilation, 2012's Given to the Wild, was even Mercury Prize-nominated and certified gold in their native UK.

FIVE FACTS:

1. This is The Maccabees' fourth studio album.
2. The band members **grew up in London, where the band itself was formed in 2004**.
3. The Maccabees decided on their band name by **flicking through a copy of the Bible and choosing a word in it largely at random**.
4. The band started working on this album **as early as the start of 2013**.
5. Explaining in January 2014 why progress on the album had been slow, guitarist Felix White said: "We've got a lot of songs but every time you write something new, it raises the standard."





Something Like Happiness

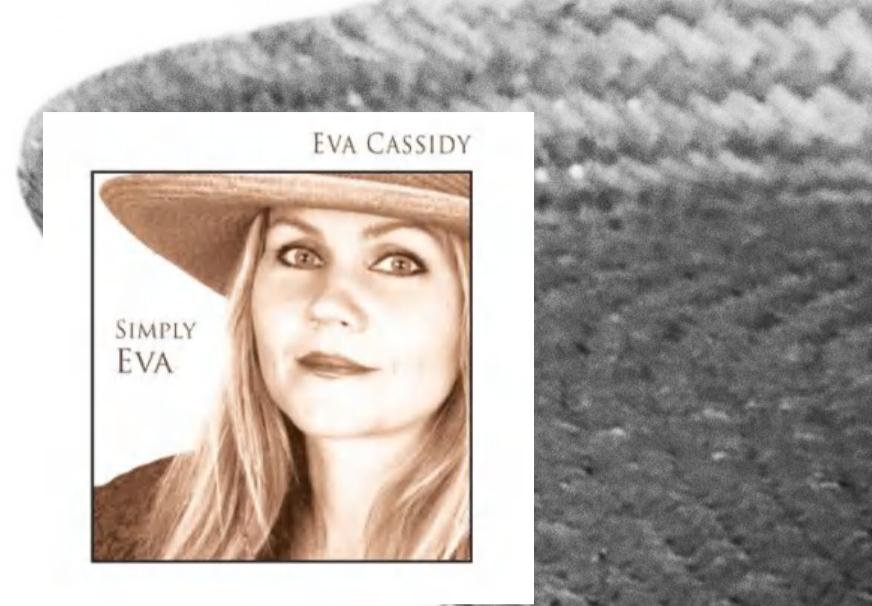
Simply Eva

Eva Cassidy

The American vocalist and guitarist has become popular for her interpretations of musical classics in various genres, including jazz, gospel and country. Tragically, however, she had little fame outside her native Washington, D.C. before her death in 1996. Simply Eva has just been released on iTunes and is great listening for people who want to hear Cassidy's guitar-playing in an acoustic environment.

FIVE FACTS:

- 1. Cassidy was born on February 2, 1963 in Washington, D.C.**
- 2. She was given a guitar by her father, who also taught her how to play chords, when she was nine years old.**
3. She died of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, in Bowie, Maryland, aged 33 on November 2, 1996.
4. Honors that Cassidy received during her short lifetime included **three "Wammies" from the Washington Area Music Association.**
- 5. Anglo-Georgian singer Katie Melua's first album, Call Off the Search, includes a song called "Faraway Voice" that pays tribute to Cassidy.**

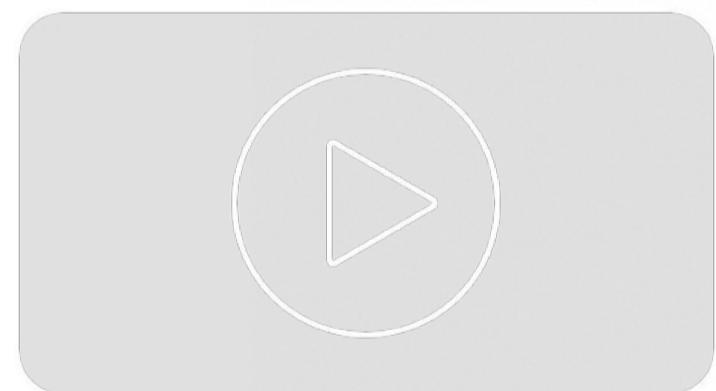


[iTunes Preview](#)



Genre: Pop
Released: Jul 31, 2015
12 Songs
Price: \$9.99

We have not received enough ratings to display an average for this album.



Songbird







Over the Rainbow







MAKER OF HACKED RADIO SAYS SYSTEM IS UNIQUE TO FIAT CHRYSLER

The company that makes car radios that friendly hackers exploited to take control of a Jeep Cherokee says its other infotainment systems don't have the same security flaw.

Harman International CEO Dinesh Paliwal said Tuesday that the hackers used a cellular connection to get to the radio, which they used to control critical functions such as brakes and steering.

The hack by Twitter security expert Charlie Miller and Chris Valasek, who heads auto security for a consulting firm, touched off the recall of 1.4 million vehicles from Fiat Chrysler to patch software holes. On Saturday, the government announced that it would investigate the Harman Kardon radios to see which other manufacturers use them and whether they had the same vulnerabilities.

The hackers, who informed Fiat Chrysler of their findings, were able to control the Jeep remotely with a laptop computer, sending the auto industry scrambling to make sure its systems are secure. They were to release specifics about their attack at a hackers' conference in Las Vegas this week.

But Paliwal said the radio system that was hacked, with an 8.4-inch touch screen, was developed about five years ago and doesn't have as many security safeguards as current models. "We believe based on our assessment with all other customers we supply our system to that the Chrysler system is the only one exposed to this particular experimental hack," Paliwal said on the company's fiscal fourth-quarter earnings conference call. "So it's a unique situation."

The hackers, he said, were able to get from cellular connection into the radio and then to a network that handles commands for critical functions. "Once you go through an open port in a network, it's like leaving a door open in a secure house," he said. "Once you get in, then you can mimic as if you are one of the authorized messengers, you start to send messages."

Miller and Valasek released some of their findings last week, but Paliwal said Harman was told about the hack late last year and worked with Fiat Chrysler on a software fix. He also said Harman engineers are cooperating with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration investigation.

NHTSA said it is investigating about 2.8 million Harman radios. "If sufficient similarities exist, the investigation will examine if there is cause for concern that security issues exist in other Harman Kardon products," the agency wrote.

The vulnerability was exposed last week in a Wired magazine story. Fiat Chrysler said it sealed off a loophole in its internal cellular telephone network with vehicles to prevent similar attacks. Owners will be sent a USB drive that they can plug in and fix the software issue.

Harman International Industries Inc., which makes infotainment systems and designs software, on Tuesday reported earnings of \$100 million, or \$1.37 per share, during its fiscal fourth quarter, up 14 percent from a year ago.





SCIENCE





CHALLENGER,
COLUMBIA
WRECKAGE ON
PUBLIC DISPLAY
FOR 1ST TIME

NASA is offering up wreckage from the Challenger and Columbia for public view after hiding it from the world for decades.

A new exhibit at Kennedy Space Center features two pieces of debris, one from each lost shuttle, as well as poignant, personal reminders of the 14 astronauts killed in flight.

It is an unprecedented collection of artifacts - the first time, in fact, that any Challenger or Columbia remains have been openly displayed.

NASA's intent is to show how the astronauts lived, rather than how they died. As such, there are no pictures in the "Forever Remembered" exhibit of Challenger breaking apart in the Florida sky nearly 30 years ago or Columbia debris raining down on Texas 12 years ago.

Since the tragic re-entry, Columbia's scorched remains have been stashed in off-limits offices at the space center. But NASA had to pry open the underground tomb housing Challenger's pieces - a pair of abandoned missile silos at neighboring Cape Canaveral Air Force Station - to retrieve the section of fuselage now on display.

The exhumation was conducted in secrecy. Everything about the exhibit, in fact, was kept hush-hush during the four years it took to complete the project, out of respect to the dead astronauts' families.

June Scobee Rodgers had never seen an actual remnant of her husband's destroyed shuttle, Challenger, until previewing the exhibit just before its low-key opening at the end of June.

Displayed in a dimly lit room: a 12-foot section of the left side body panel of Challenger, standing vertically and bearing the gouged and scraped but still brilliantly colorful U.S. flag, and the charred frames for Columbia's cockpit windows, seemingly floating at eye level.



Friends and Heroes



“Sad, yes,” to see the wreckage but it is “a wonderful memorial” to the shuttles, Scobee Rodgers said. The items representing the astronauts, on the other hand, are a “truly fitting” reminder of who they were as individuals.

Challenger commander Francis “Dick” Scobee’s display case, on the left side of the exhibit’s main corridor, contains the leather helmet from the Starduster biplane he and June used to fly, and his blue “TFNG” T-shirt from the Astronaut Class of 1978, nicknamed the Thirty-Five New Guys.

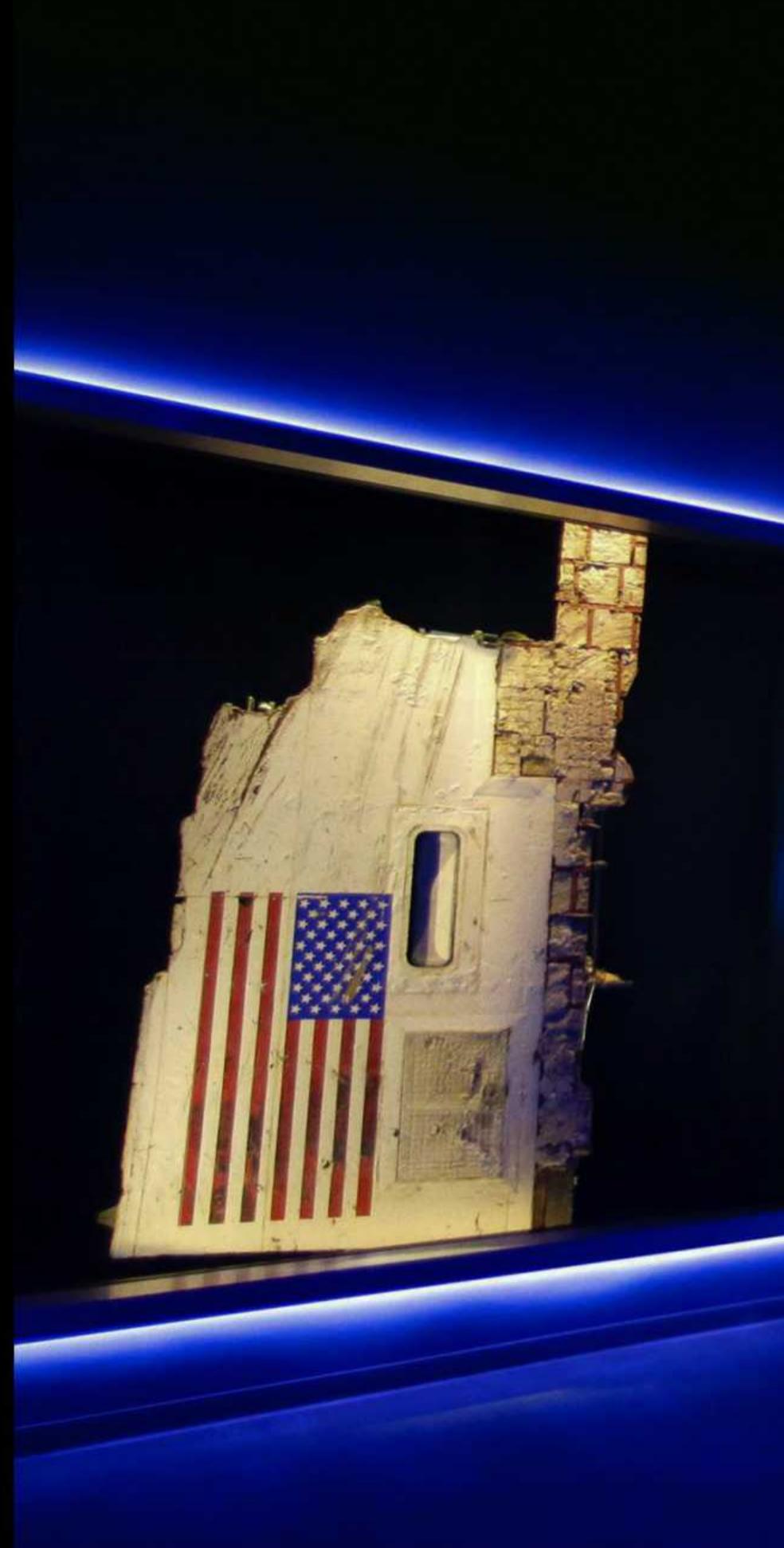
Across the hall on the right are Columbia commander Rick Husband’s scuffed cowboy boots and well-worn Bible opened to Proverbs. There’s a display case for each astronaut, filled with personal items, although not all families contributed, including schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe’s.

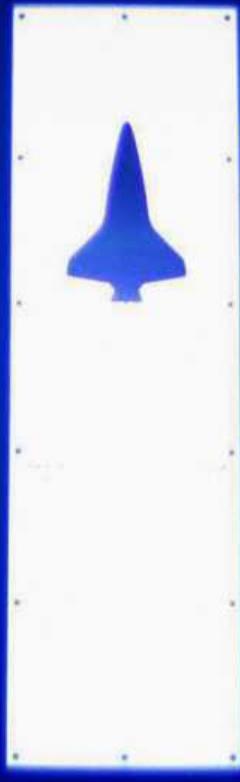
“Forever Remembered” is a permanent exhibit, part of a larger display centered on the retired space shuttle Atlantis. NASA opted to keep Atlantis at Kennedy, the shuttle launch site, after Atlantis closed the program with the final mission in 2011.

The entrance to the new exhibit is directly beneath the nose of Atlantis, which is suspended with its payload bay doors wide open as though perpetually orbiting Earth.

One recent afternoon in July, tourists filled the predominantly blue hallway, pausing in front of the astronaut display cases. One woman wondered aloud which shuttle burned up and which one blew up. A few young children scampered about, their parents shushing them given the solemnity of the place.

A few weeks after visiting the exhibit, Scobee Rodgers noted in a phone interview that much of the world’s population wasn’t even born yet when Challenger went down in 1986.





"It's mostly history for the general public. It's very personal for us," she said.

Amber DiSalvatore - an Apopka, Florida, resident touring the space center with her husband and two children - was 4 years old at the time of Challenger. Seeing the actual wreckage - along with Husband's Bible - brought tears to her eyes.

The astronauts sacrificed their lives for exploration, said DiSalvatore, "so it's something that everybody - every human being - should know."

In the aftermath of the Feb. 1, 2003, Columbia accident, NASA meticulously stored the 42 tons of debris in Kennedy's iconic Vehicle Assembly Building and made them available for research. The space agency displayed a remnant or two of Columbia in a restricted area of the space center and, for the fifth anniversary, organized a traveling in-house exhibit. The relics were intended as safety reminders for the workforce. The three surviving shuttles - Discovery, Atlantis and Endeavour, Challenger's replacement - still were flying then.

After Challenger's accident, NASA wanted it out of sight and out of mind. The Jan. 28, 1986, launch disaster unfolded on live TV before countless schoolchildren eager to see an everyday teacher rocketing toward space. And so Challenger's wreckage - all 118 tons of it, salvaged from the Atlantic - was buried in the pair of former missile silos, 90 feet deep.

The chamber containing this particular fuselage section, in fact, had never been opened - until the "Forever Remembered" exhibit began to take shape.

Determined to avoid any hint of commercialism or sensationalism, NASA took charge of the memorial effort at the visitor complex, which is run by an outside company.



nds and Heroes



The job fell to Michael Ciannilli, a shuttle engineer and test director who had become responsible for the Challenger and Columbia debris.

"Our biggest concern the whole time was doing the right thing," Ciannilli said. "Is this the right time? Is this the right thing?"

As the conversations unfolded over the months then years, Ciannilli entered the underground storage silos to find the proper display piece to represent Challenger.

"I was hoping to find something that would show the beauty of Challenger, the dignity of Challenger, the strength of Challenger, and these are words I don't use lightly," Ciannilli said.

The 12-foot section of fuselage with the flag fit the bill. For Columbia, he chose the cockpit window frames. He said it's like gazing into the eyes of Columbia and thus its soul.

Ciannilli tapped the same preservation company that had worked on the Titanic, for the Challenger and Columbia relics. He sought out soothing, uplifting music for the exhibit.

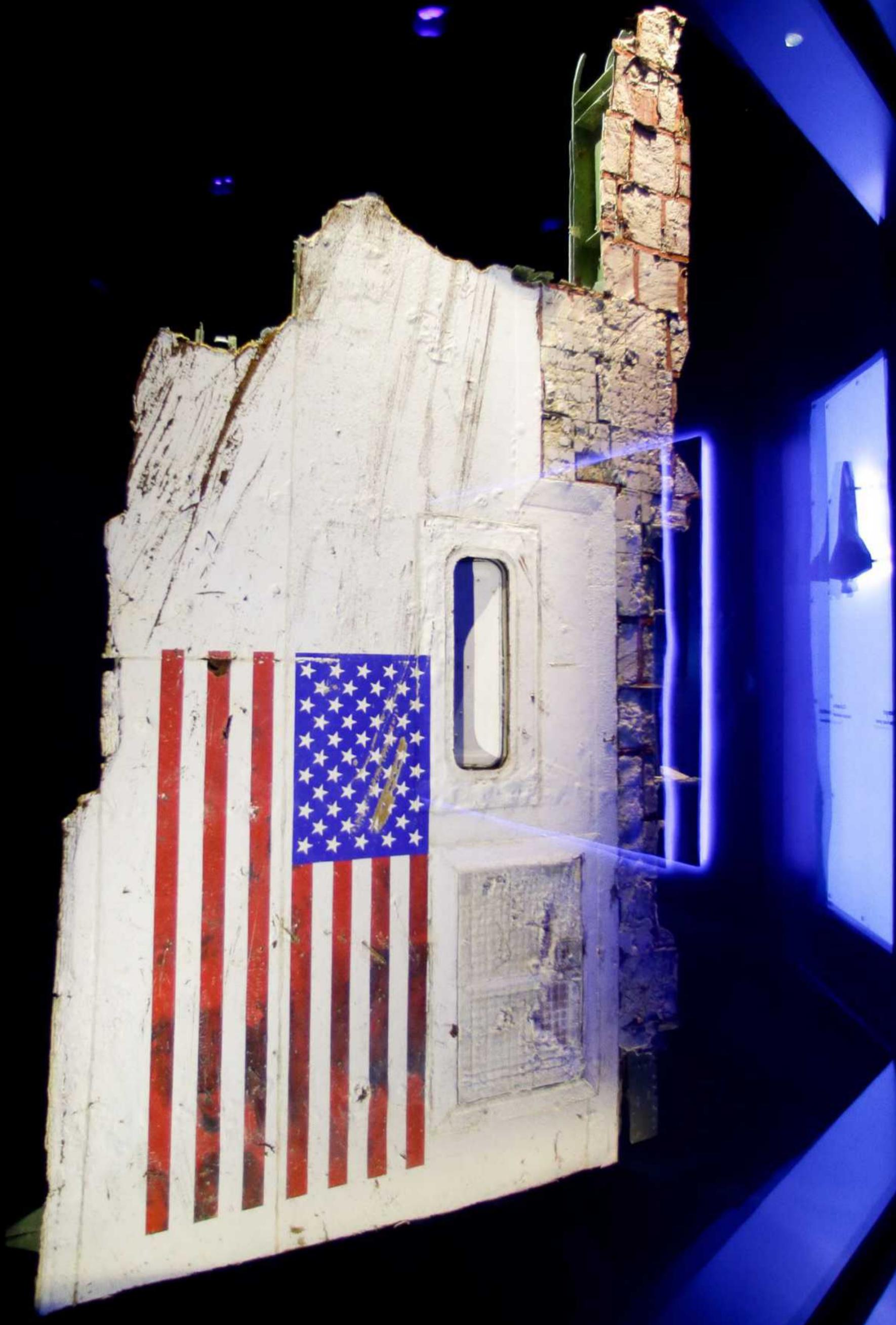
And, yes, he deliberately kept out real-time scenes of the shuttles disintegrating.

"There's more to this story" than those awful final moments, he said. "Great pains were taken not to have anything sensationalized or exploited."

Above all else, Ciannilli wanted the end result to be respectful.

"I can't stop thinking about it," Evelyn Husband-Thompson, the widow of Columbia's commander, confided in a NASA interview. "As you walk in, you know that you're in a special place."

Online:
Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex:
<https://www.kennedyspacecenter.com/>





TAX FILING
PROBLEMS
COULD
JEOPARDIZE
HEALTH LAW
AID FOR 1.8M



About 1.8 million households that got financial help for health insurance under President Barack Obama's law now have issues with their tax returns that could jeopardize their subsidies next year. Administration officials say those taxpayers will have to act quickly.

"There's still time, but people need to take action soon," said Lori Lodes, communications director for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which runs HealthCare.gov.

The health care law provides tax credits to help people afford private insurance. Nationally, that aid averages \$272 a month, covering roughly three-fourths of the premium. By funneling the aid through the income tax system, Democrats were able to call the overhaul the largest middle-class tax cut for health care in history. But they also spliced together two really complicated areas for consumers: health insurance and taxes. Confusion has been the result for many.

Consumers who got health care tax credits are required to file tax returns that properly account for them, even if they are unaccustomed to filing because their incomes are low. Unless they follow through, "they will not be able to receive tax credits to help lower the cost of their health insurance for 2016," Lodes explained.

Treasury officials said 1.8 million households are at risk of losing subsidies for next year, and that number breaks down as follows:

-About 710,000 households that have not filed a 2014 tax return, although they were legally required to account for health insurance tax credits that they received.

-Some 360,000 households that got tax credits and requested an extension to file their returns. They have until Oct. 15.





-About 760,000 households that got tax credits and filed their tax returns omitted a new form that is the key to accounting for the subsidies. Called Form 8962, it was new for this year's tax filing season.

"I think it was definitely confusing for people," said Elizabeth Colvin of Foundation Communities, an Austin, Texas, nonprofit that helps low-income people with health insurance and taxes. "It could have been worse, quite honestly. I think a lot of tax preparers didn't know how to do these (forms) either."

The 1.8 million households with tax issues represent 40 percent of 4.5 million households that had tax credits provided on their behalf and must account for them. The rest had their returns successfully processed by the IRS as of the end of May. Earlier this summer, a Supreme Court decision preserved health care tax credits for consumers in all 50 states, turning back a challenge from conservatives opposed to "Obamacare." Because of the law's built-in complexity, some of those consumers may now be at risk of losing their assistance.

Administration officials say they're working hard to prevent that. An estimated 16 million people have gained health insurance since HealthCare.gov opened for business in late 2013, and the White House does not want any slippage.

The IRS has started reaching out to consumers with tax issues. HealthCare.gov is reporting an increase in tax-related calls to its consumer assistance center. That telephone number is 1-800-318-2596. The Health and Human Services department plans another outreach campaign in the fall, coordinated with the start of the 2016 sign-up season on Nov. 1. "What the IRS is doing here is sending these people a not-so-gentle reminder that they



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need to file or they will put their subsidy at risk," said Mark Ciaramitaro, vice president for tax and health care at H&R Block, the tax preparation company. He cautioned that many consumers will find the process cumbersome, so they should waste no time getting started.

Despite a thinning out of taxpayer services due to budget cuts, IRS Commissioner John Koskinen says the tax-filing season went relatively smoothly, even with the health care law added. Nonetheless, he acknowledged that there's a learning curve for everybody on health care.

"This is the first year for this new provision," Koskinen wrote in a letter to lawmakers last month. "We expect that taxpayers will continue to better understand this process as it becomes more routine."

The administration and the health law's supporters could be doing a better job educating consumers, said Judy Solomon of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which advocates for low-income people.

"There is definitely room for improvement to make sure people understand how it works," she said. "They are getting an advance payment of a tax credit, and to finish the process they need to file a tax return. They have to look at it as a process that is a year long and has multiple steps."

Online:

HealthCare.gov: <https://www.healthcare.gov/taxes/marketplace-health-plan/>



TOP 10 SONGS

CAN'T FEEL MY FACE

THE WEEKND

CHEERLEADER

(FELIX JAEHN REMIX RADIO EDIT)
OMI

WATCH ME (WHIP / NAE NAE)

SILENTO

FIGHT SONG

RACHEL PLATTEN

GOOD FOR YOU (FEAT. A\$AP ROCKY)

SELENA GOMEZ

LEAN ON (FEAT. MØ & DJ SNAKE)

MAJOR LAZER

HONEY, I'M GOOD.

ANDY GRAMMER

SHUT UP AND DANCE

WALK THE MOO

KICK THE DUST UP

LUKE BRYAN

WHERE ARE Ü NOW (WITH JUSTIN BIEBER)

SKRILLEX & DIPLO



SEVEN DUTY

THE FLAW



TOP 10 ALBUMS

JUST

WOMAN
JILL SCOTT

1989
TAYLOR SWIFT

NOT AN APOLOGY
BEA MILLER

KILL THE LIGHTS
LUKE BRYAN

MONTEVALLO
SAM HUNT

BLURRYFACE
TWENTY ONE PILOTS

THE BLADE
ASHLEY MONROE

COVERED: ALIVE IN ASIA (DELUXE VERSION)
ISRAEL & NEW BREED

X (DELUXE EDITION)
ED SHEERAN

KILL THE FLAW
SEVENDUST









TOP 10 TV SHOWS

MEETING CAIT
I AM CAIT, SEASON 1

ALONE AND UNAFRAID
THE LAST SHIP, SEASON 2

FORT DEFIANCE
THE STRAIN, SEASON 2

EPISODE 5
HUMANS

TOE TO TOE
SUITS, SEASON 5

NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL
FALLING SKIES, SEASON 5

MEI MEI
HELL ON WHEELS, SEASON 5

O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU
Pretty Little Liars, SEASON 6

EPS1.4_3XPLOITS.WMV
Mr. Robot, SEASON 1

A RICKLE IN TIME
Rick and Morty, SEASON 2





TOP 10 BOOKS

GREY

E L JAMES

PAPER TOWNS

JOHN GREEN

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

PAULA HAWKINS

GO SET A WATCHMAN

HARPER LEE

THRILL ME

SUSAN MALLERY

CIRCLING THE SUN

PAULA McLAIN

BADLANDS

C. J. Box

CODE OF CONDUCT

BRAD THOR

LUCKIEST GIRL ALIVE

JESSICA KNOLL

NEW ENGLAND SOUP FACTORY COOKBOOK

MARJORIE DRUKER & CLARA SILVERSTEIN





TOYOTA ROBOT CAN PICK UP AFTER PEOPLE, HELP THE SICK

Toyota's new robot that glides around like R2-D2 is devoted to a single task: picking things up.

HSR, short for "human support robot," comes with a single mechanical arm that can grasp objects of various shapes and sizes and also pick up smaller items with a tiny suction cup.

It doesn't have other tricks in its repertoire, except for a computer panel on its head for surfing the Internet. A person can also access the robot from another computer and use it like a camera-phone.

Kouichi Ikeda, its engineer, is serious about using it to help around regular homes. First people with disabilities, and then for the elderly in general. Picking up is especially challenging

for people with spinal disorders and other ailments that hamper the ability to stoop down and grab, he said.

"Although it can only do one simple task of picking up, it's already making disabled people quite happy. We're just getting started, but eventually we want it to enter people's homes," Ikeda said at an exhibition of health care technology in Yokohama, southwest of Tokyo.

Nearly 40 percent of Japan's population will be 65 or older by 2060, and with the rest of the developed world and some developing nations following that track, Toyota is banking on the demand for robot helpers to grow.

"People feel more comfortable asking a robot to pick up after them than asking a human helper," said Tadashi Hatakenaka, manager and engineer at the Yokohama Rehabilitation Center.

A robot like HSR is also ideal to replace service dogs, which go through special training to help people with various disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs, have balance issues or may be prone to seizures, he said.

Toyota came up with the basic concept model for HSR in 2012.

The revamped model, announced this month, is ready to enter universities, research facilities and businesses from next year, in partnerships to develop more applications, so the robot can enter homes as quickly as possible.

One drawback is cost. Mass production is needed for the price to come down. Toyota declined to give the current price.

Ikeda showed how HSR can be controlled relatively easily by tapping on a tablet device, to fetch a TV remote-controller.

The 135 centimeter (four-foot-four) tall robot has several cameras, including two on its head that look like its eyes, and sensors on its body. It scoots quietly around in all directions.









Unlike the robotic arms at auto-assembly plants, HSR's grip and bumps are designed to be soft so they can't hurt anyone. But it can pick up items weigh up to 1.2 kilograms (2.6 pounds).

There was no attempt to make its design cute, like the Pepper childlike robot that recently went on sale in Japan from Japanese Internet company Softbank Corp.

Toyota has long been working on robots, including a human-shaped one with fingers dexterous enough to play the trumpet. Another plays the violin.

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